COLLECTED WORKS OF ERASMUS

VOLUME 67

This page intentionally left blank

COLLECTED WORKS OF ERASMUS

SPIRITUALIA and PASTORALIA

EXOMOLOGESIS

ECCLESIASTES 1

edited by Frederick J. McGinness

translated by Michael J. Heath and James L.P. Butrica

annotated by Michael J. Heath and Frederick J. McGinness

contributing editor Alexander Dalzell

University of Toronto Press

Toronto / Buffalo / London

The research and publication costs of the
Collected Works of Erasmus are supported by
University of Toronto Press.

© University of Toronto Press 2015
Toronto / Buffalo / London
Printed in the U.S.A.

ISBN 978-0-8020-9948-8 (2 vol. set)

Printed on acid-free paper

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Erasmus, Desiderius, –1536
[Works. English]
Collected works of Erasmus.

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.
Contents: v. 67–68. Spiritualia and Pastoralia
ISBN 978-0-8020-9948-8 (v. 67–68)

I. Title.

PA8500 1974 199'.492 C74006326X

University of Toronto Press acknowledges the financial assistance
to its publishing program of the Canada Council for the Arts
and the Ontario Arts Council, an agency of the Government of Ontario

Canada Council for the Arts Conseil des Arts du Canada

ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO
an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

University of Toronto Press acknowledges the financial support
of the Government of Canada through the Canada Book Fund
for its publishing activities

Collected Works of Erasmus

The aim of the Collected Works of Erasmus
is to make available an accurate, readable English text
of Erasmus' correspondence and his
other principal writings. The edition is planned
and directed by an Editorial Board, an Executive Committee,
and an Advisory Committee.

EDITORIAL BOARD

William Barker, University of King's College
Alexander Dalzell, University of Toronto
James M. Estes, University of Toronto
Charles Fantazzi, East Carolina University
James K. Farge, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies
John N. Grant, University of Toronto
Paul F. Grendler, University of Toronto
Brad Inwood, University of Toronto
James K. McConica, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, *Chairman*
John O'Malley, Georgetown University
Mechtilde O'Mara, University of Toronto
Hilmar M. Pabel, Simon Fraser University
Jane E. Phillips, University of Kentucky
Erika Rummel, University of Toronto
Robert D. Sider, Dickinson College
James D. Tracy, University of Minnesota
Mark Vessey, University of British Columbia

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Alexander Dalzell, University of Toronto
James M. Estes, University of Toronto
Charles Fantazzi, East Carolina University
Lynn Fisher, University of Toronto Press
Paul F. Grendler, University of Toronto
James K. McConica, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies
John O'Malley, Georgetown University

Mechtilde O'Mara, University of Toronto
Jane E. Phillips, University of Kentucky
Suzanne Rancourt, University of Toronto Press, *Chair*
Erika Rummel, University of Toronto
Robert D. Sider, Dickinson College
James D. Tracy, University of Minnesota
John Yates, University of Toronto Press

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Jan Bloemendal, Conseil international ASD
H.J. de Jonge, Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden
Anthony Grafton, Princeton University
Ian W.F. Maclean, Oxford University
Clarence H. Miller, Saint Louis University
John Tedeschi, University of Wisconsin
J. Trapman, Conseil international ASD
Timothy J. Wengert, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

In memory of James Lawrence Peter Butrica

Contents

Foreword
by Frederick J. McGinness
ix

The Manner of Confessing / *Exomologesis sive modus confitendi*
translated and annotated by Michael J. Heath
1

The Evangelical Preacher, book one
Ecclesiastes sive de ratione concionandi
translated by James L.P. Butrica
annotated by Frederick J. McGinness
77

Works Frequently Cited
447

Short-Title Forms for Erasmus' Works
459

This page intentionally left blank

Foreword

Volumes 67 and 68 of the *Collected Works of Erasmus*, comprising the introductions and annotated translations of *Exomologesis sive modus confitendi* (1524) and *Ecclesiastes sive de ratione concionandi* (1535), have been made possible through the generous dedication of a number of scholars whose exemplary work it is fitting to acknowledge at the outset. It has been many years ago now since Michael Heath completed the introduction, translated, and annotated Erasmus' principal treatise on confession, *Exomologesis*, and eight years since James Butrica brought forth the first English translation of books 1–4 of Erasmus' next-to-last and lengthiest treatise, *Ecclesiastes*. As the final stages of his first complete draft were being revised in early 2005, while working through various questions and difficulties presented by a number of passages of Erasmus' text, James Butrica, after months of struggle with a debilitating illness, passed away on 20 July 2006, leaving the English text all but complete in its final form. With his passing the University of Toronto Press and Memorial University lost an amiable colleague, translator, and superb classicist.

Two years after James Butrica's death, James McConica and Ron Schoeffel at the University of Toronto Press enlisted Professor Emeritus Alexander Dalzell, well known for his work as translator of many volumes of CWE, to collaborate with me on James Butrica's translation in order to emend a number of passages and resolve many remaining questions raised by the Latin text that he and I had not yet settled. The final translation of book 1 of *Ecclesiastes* appearing here in volume 67 and books 2–4 in volume 68 therefore owes a vast debt to Alexander Dalzell, contributing editor, who after James Butrica's untimely death graciously assumed responsibility for the final edition of the English text and worked diligently to complete it on schedule. Alexander Dalzell's polished emendations, with the collaboration of Ann Dalzell, gracefully advance James Butrica's workmanlike rendering of Erasmus' Latin text in a way he no doubt would have commended as meticulous,

elegant, and fully in tune with Erasmus' sensitivities. Special thanks go as well to Daniel J. Sheerin who went over the complete earlier draft of this treatise and offered copious helpful comments and suggestions. This work is also deeply indebted to the late Jacques Chomarat, who established the final Latin text of *Ecclesiastes* that was used for this edition and appeared as volumes v-4 (1991) and v-5 (1994) in the North Holland edition (ASD) of *Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami*.[1] Jacques Chomarat passed away on 9 June 1998, not long after completing this edition, but his exhaustive efforts in establishing an authoritative Latin text with full critical apparatus, introduction, and ample footnotes have been of immense help to those of us who now bring to light the English translation and annotations of this singularly important treatise of Erasmus. Volumes 67 and 68 are based on Chomarat's Latin text and in consultation with the Leiden edition (LB). Erasmus himself apparently added an *erratum* to the *editio princeps*,[2] which was incorporated into Chomarat's Latin edition of the text. Fortunately only a very few modifications occurred between the *editio princeps* and the second edition, which appeared in March 1536 (B: Basel).[3] These few differences have been noted in the footnotes by the translator.

We are also grateful to Michael J. Heath, James K. McConica, John O'Malley, the late John H. Munro, Carole Straw, Wendy Watson, John Varriano, Angelo Mazzocco, T. Frank Kennedy, Margaret Liggett, Lyn Minnich, Sarah Wilson, Kathryn Kirby, Robert Doran, Holly Sharac, David Myers, Eugene Hill, Frank Brownlow, Carlin Barton, Andrew Feldherr, Mark Peterson, Benny Grey Schuster, Katharine Maughan, Calvin Payne-Taylor,

* * * * *

1 Desiderius Erasmus *Ecclesiastes sive de ratione concionandi* ed Jacques Chomarat in ASD v-4 *Ecclesiastes* (Libri I–II); v-5 *Ecclesiastes* (Libri III–IV) (Amsterdam 1991 and 1994)

2 See Chomarat's discussion of the very minor changes in the successive editions of *Ecclesiastes* from 1536–40 in ASD v-4 22–7. Fortunately for Chomarat very little emendation of the text was called for, thanks largely to The Royal Library at Copenhagen's possession of an autograph of a substantial portion of the first book of *Ecclesiastes*. An examination of this work shows that very few minor changes were added, and those mainly to clarify or enrich the sense of the text, correct the Latin, etc. Chomarat's edition of *Ecclesiastes* incorporates those emendations that have appeared in successive editions of the work, and at times, but rarely, he emends the text himself to re-establish the order and sense. See Butrica 'Translator's Note' 239. For the 'Copenhagen Manuscript,' see 'Appendix XIII: The Copenhagen Manuscript' Allen III 630–4; see also Kleinhans I–II.

3 See Chomarat's introduction ASD v-4 28 for abbreviations to the various editions of this work.

Natalie Kulikowski, Bryan Goodwin, Ann Drury, Jennifer Chien, Rozelynn Douglas, Ajay Menon, and to Carla DeSantis, Philippa Matheson, and Mary Baldwin and the editorial staff of the University of Toronto Press.

Finally, the editors must acknowledge the sad loss of Ron Schoeffel, University of Toronto Press editor, who did so much in making these volumes possible, whose gracious, unflagging assistance to everyone collaborating in the CWE project over the years has been an admirable testimony to his great and generous spirit.

FJM

This page intentionally left blank

THE MANNER OF CONFESSING

Exomologesis sive modus confitendi

translated and annotated by
MICHAEL J. HEATH

Exomologesis sive modus confitendi was published by Froben at Basel in March 1524. With it were printed Erasmus' short paraphrase on Psalm 3, his letter to Joost Vroye concerning sudden death, an exchange of correspondence with Pope Adrian VI on Erasmus' disputes with the Louvain theologians, and the *Conclusiones* of Diego López Zúñiga followed by Erasmus' *Apologia*.[1] These pieces were well chosen to accompany Erasmus' contentious discussion of the sacrament of penance. The psalm commentary, though relatively uncontroversial and unspecific,[2] does evoke the troubles of the faithful beset by enemies, the temptations of sin, and the consoling abundance of God's mercy and forgiveness, while the letter to Vroye includes a polemical passage on deathbed confessions.[3] The other pieces relate to the controversies in which Erasmus had recently been embroiled, not least over the sacrament of penance; in a sense the *Exomologesis* is merely the longest contribution to a debate in which Erasmus was involved for more than a decade.[4]

In the psalm commentary Erasmus gives a clear and traditional description of the object of the sacrament. It is essentially a re-enactment of the paschal mystery, in which a Christian dies to sin, through contrition, and rises again with Christ into newness of life.[5] The controversy had arisen over Erasmus' views on the origins of the sacrament as practised in the contemporary church and on the details of its operation.

There are many references in the New Testament to the confession of sins and to the imposition of penalties for sin, but there are no precise instructions on the procedure to be followed. The church had adopted two distinct methods. The austere discipline of public penance leading to absolution in the early church[6] had been superseded gradually by the familiar 'private' penitential system involving auricular confession, absolution, and

* * * * *

1 See, respectively: CWE 63 147–68; Ep 1347; Epp 1310, 1324, 1329, and 1338 (the latter pair first published with the *Exomologesis*); LB IX 381B–392C. Erasmus had been at work on the *Exomologesis* since the previous November (Ep 1397:15).

2 There is a brief passage (CWE 63 159–60) condemning the 'mockers of the church's sacraments' and the 'heretics' who belittle penance.

3 Ep 1347:82–104

4 The work is comparable in this sense to the *Institutio christiani matrimonii* of 1526 (CWE 69 203–438), another attempt by Erasmus to resume and clarify a long-standing controversy over one of the sacraments.

5 CWE 63 164

6 This kind of penance could be performed once only, according to the famous dictum of St Ambrose: 'As there is one baptism, so there is one penance' (*De poenitentia* 2.10 PL 16 [1845] 520). This is cited (as outmoded) by Peter Lombard *Sententiae* book 4 dist 14 c 3 and by most subsequent medieval commentators.

penance or satisfaction.[7] Penance was not universally recognized as a sacrament until the twelfth century, but it was made an annual obligation by decree of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and became, under the scrutiny of canon lawyers and scholastic theologians, subject to a dense complex of regulations and conditions.[8]

In the fifteenth century some humanists began to emphasize the essentially inward character of the sacrament and the need for individual responsibility, presenting repentance as the most essential of moral virtues.[9] More radically still, Luther's *Sermon on the Sacrament of Penance* (1519) reduced the priest's role in granting absolution to a purely declaratory function, though Luther recognized the utility of the sacrament as a pastoral instrument. In the following year he denounced the schoolmen's regulations in *A Discussion on How Confession Should Be Made*, and declared roundly, in *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, that the institution could not be considered a sacrament since it lacked the necessary visible sign, divinely instituted.[10]

* * * * *

7 The new system may have evolved from Celtic and Anglo-Saxon practices codified in the 'penitentials,' some of which date from the sixth century. The evolution of the private system is still a matter of controversy; the various cases were fairly put by R.C. Mortimer *The Origins of Private Penance in the Western Church* (Oxford 1939). See also the introduction to McNeil (3–22), which is followed by surviving fragments of early documents.

8 The most accessible guide to these developments is Tentler *Sin* (see 3 n1 for his predecessors), complemented by Myers *Sinning* 15–103. See also the historical survey in Spykman 17–83; Jean Delumeau *Sin and Fear: the Emergence of a Western Guilt Culture* trans Eric Nicholson (New York 1990); Rahner; and the background material in Payne 'Penance and Extreme Unction' in *Erasmus: His Theology of the Sacraments* (181–216). For a more detailed but more controversial account, see B. Poschmann *Penance and the Anointing of the Sick* trans F. Courtney (Freiburg and London 1964). On the evolution in Germany, see Susan C. Karant-Nunn *The Reformation of Ritual: an Interpretation of Early Modern Germany* (London and New York 1997) 91–137. For articles on practices throughout Christendom, see *Penitence in the Age of Reformations* ed K. Jackson Lualdi and A.T. Thayer (Aldershot and Burlington, Vt 2000).

9 See Myers 'Humanism' 364 and the example of Bartolomeo della Fonte in Charles Trinkaus *In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought* (London 1970) II 616–33 ('Humanists on the Sacraments: On Penance'). Humanists also found relief from the guilt culture of the Middle Ages in the attitude of the ancient Greeks, who held that sin derived largely from ignorance.

10 *Eyn Sermon von dem Sacrament der Pusz* (LW 35 9–22), *Confitendi ratio* (LW 39 35–7), and *De captivitate Babylonica* (LW 36 124). See Spykman 90–113; Rahner 153–62; P. Palmer in NCE 11 76–7 on the Reformers' attacks on the schoolmen's analysis. The latter argued that the 'matter of penance' (the penitent's acts) was

When Luther burned the papal bull excommunicating him, he also cast into the fire one of the most popular confessors' manuals, the *Summa angelica* of Angelus de Clavasio.[11]

Erasmus first became embroiled in the controversy because in the *Annotationes* of 1516 and 1519 he had 'raised in passing'[12] the question of the divine institution of the sacrament as at present practised, for which he could find no precise scriptural authority.[13] It seemed to Erasmus' critics that such doubts also called into question the necessity of the sacrament and endorsed Luther's attempts to abolish the majority of the sacraments. Erasmus was first attacked on these grounds by Jan Briart and Edward Lee at Louvain,[14] and his reply to Lee's detailed criticism was published in March or April 1520.

The lengthy passage on penance in this *Responsio* was a reply to Lee's attack on the annotation on Acts 19:18.[15] Here Erasmus adopted his most extreme position, from which he was gradually to retreat over the next decade. He repeated his conviction that most modern penitential practices were of human institution, demolishing in particular appeals to Matthew 8:4. He complained, as Luther was to do, that the church's requirement that

* * * * *

given form by absolution, and that together these made the sign of the sacrament. Luther considered this dangerously close to Pelagianism; the Council of Trent reasserted the traditional position against him (Denzinger 1673–5 and 1704).

11 Tentler *Sin* 34–5; Myers 'Humanism' 365. For succinct accounts of Luther's views, see Myers *Sinning* 63–76; Karant-Nunn (see introductory note 3 n8 above) 94–9.

12 He used the phrase, rather ruefully, while writing the *Exomologesis*, in a letter of January 1524, probably to Lorenzo Campeggi (Ep 1410:34–9). For fuller treatment of the controversies involving Erasmus see Payne's chapter 'Penance and Extreme Unction' (3 n8 above) and Tentler 'Forgiveness.' Neither writer, however, knew of the *Manifesta mendacia* or of Erasmus' textual emendations to the *Exomologesis*, discussed later in this introduction (see introductory note 10 below).

13 On the medieval controversy on this point, see Tentler *Sin* 57–9; and on the continuing debate since the Council of Trent reaffirmed in 1551 the principle of divine institution (Denzinger 1670, 1683 and 1701), see Rahner 166–74.

14 Erasmus gives an account of the controversies in Louvain in Ep 1225:1–134. Lee's *Annotationes* were published in February 1520. On his relations with Erasmus generally, see Rummel I 95–120.

15 CWE 72 362–4; Erasmus' original annotation concerned public penance in the early church; in 1519 he added the hypothesis that modern auricular confession had developed later from the practice of bishops counselling informally those troubled in conscience (LB VI 507–8).

confession be complete made no allowance for human frailties, such as lapse of memory. He asked provocatively what harm would result from abolishing private confession, taunting Lee with underestimating and thereby undermining the church's authority; it would retain both the power of binding and loosing (Matt 16:19), through excommunication, and also the traditions of general public confession and absolution at mass. If confession enabled priests to know their flock, why did they so often abdicate the task to itinerant Franciscans or Dominicans? The germ of much of the *Exomologesis* lies in Erasmus' subsequent enumeration of the 'evils' that beset contemporary confession, in particular the bad character of many confessors; the satire here is sharper than anything in the *Exomologesis* itself.

Erasmus then gave Lee a history lesson (which, significantly, he did not repeat in later replies to critics) concerning the operation as well as the origin of the sacrament. He claimed that in the millennium from St John Chrysostom to the canonist Gratian, no theologian maintained that private confession as currently practised was necessary; on the contrary, all gave priority to spontaneous personal contrition leading to direct divine forgiveness, their model being St Peter (Luke 22:62). Erasmus is alluding to the ancient 'contritionist' tradition, revived in the Middle Ages by Abelard, Gratian, and Peter Lombard, where the accent was placed on sorrow and amendment rather than on acts of penance. In this tradition the best confession is one that leads to a change of life; shame before God is more salutary than shame before a priest. But the contrasting view that the consummation of penance lies in the absolution by the priest had gained ground in the thirteenth century under the aegis of St Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus, the latter going so far as to transpose the sacramentality of the whole process of penance exclusively into the priestly absolution.[16] Luther had again revived the essentials of contritionist theory.[17] Erasmus' conclusion did little to allay the suspicion that he sympathized with this theory; having reviewed the historical evidence, he offered, grudgingly, not to rebel against the church's authority if it insisted that he must conform to its opinions on the divine origin and the necessity of auricular confession.

* * * * *

16 See Rahner 157–70; Tentler *Sin* 105–6, 120–3 and, for the whole dispute, 233–300; Spykman 38–83.

17 Luther held that forgiveness is granted unconditionally to faith without the necessity for confession, still less for penitential works (Tentler *Sin* 358–60). Some modern Catholic theologians consider that it is grace that leads to contrition and that forgiveness is therefore guaranteed before penance (Rahner 164).

Naturally this far from conciliatory reply won Erasmus few friends among the theologians at Louvain. Briart, who had pressed him to acknowledge that auricular confession was instituted by Christ,[18] was now dead, but Nicolaas Baechem took over and taunted him with holding Lutheran views on confession; Erasmus protested that he had read very little of Luther.[19] Further damage was done when selected extracts from the *Annotationes* were published in pamphlets supporting Luther; they included Erasmus' complaint that the burden of confession had been increased by the traps laid by bad confessors.[20] Interestingly, Erasmus' shouting match with Baechem was held before the professor of theology at Louvain, Godschalk Rosemondt, who had recently published a traditional manual of confession; he seems, however, to have remained neutral in the debate.[21]

The controversy continued with the 1522 edition of the *Colloquia*. This included the *Confabulatio pia*, in which the boy Gaspar, a 'contritionist' who confesses daily to God, will not commit himself on the divine institution of modern confession, while his companion Erasmius criticizes the conduct of some confessors on grounds to be developed in the *Exomologesis*. Erasmus was soon defending these inflammatory remarks against Baechem, pointing out his own and the boys' orthodoxy and obedience to the church's decree ('confession I actually approve'), though repeating that his mind was 'not yet quite clear' on the origins of modern confession.[22]

From further afield Zúñiga twice attacked Erasmus' views on penance (and much else) in the *Annotationes*. In 1522 Erasmus replied briefly, reasserting his willingness to submit to the church's ruling. His second reply was published alongside the *Exomologesis* itself. In his *Conclusiones* Zúñiga had picked out four questionable propositions concerning confession, all to do with its disputed history. Erasmus refers his opponent to

* * * * *

18 Ep 1225:130–1

19 See for example Ep 1164:73–5 and Ep 1225:180–1.

20 See Ep 1202:253–5 and nn46 and 50. Erasmus repeated the point about traps in the *Apologia adversus monachos* (LB IX 1063E), adding that they condemned many to an unquiet death.

21 For the dispute with Baechem, see Rummel I 135–43; Epp 1153, 1162, 1164, and 1172; *Spongia* (CWE 78 69 n187). In Ep 1162:180–7 Erasmus insinuates that Baechem himself typified the 'bad confessor.' Rosemondt's *Confessionale* had been published in 1518.

22 See Rummel II 4–5; Epp 1299:66–74 and 1301:17–31. For the text at issue, see CWE 39 97. Erasmus also defended his views in *De utilitate colloquiorum* (CWE 40 1108). For other apparently less contentious passages on confession in the *Colloquia*, see Payne 192.

his replies to Lee, but also points out that his doubts were expressed before Leo X's bull *Exsurge Domine* (June 1520) had condemned Luther's stance. He remains open to persuasion but, on a new tack, doubts whether modern confession was instituted by the apostles: how could they have coped with the multitude of their converts? He also wonders whether confession of any kind was obligatory in the early church but, in a parting shot that reveals the context of the debate, advises Zúñiga to go off and read Luther in order to appreciate the difference between the two.[23]

It is clear from Erasmus' correspondence and other writings of this period that his 'passing remarks' on confession were constantly returning to haunt him, and his decision to devote a whole treatise to the subject, the *Exomologesis*, was in part the product of this unease. But he failed to placate his critics and in 1530 took the relatively unusual step, for him, of thoroughly revising an earlier work. This new edition of the *Exomologesis* is almost twice as long as the original.[24] The additional illustrations and clarifications somewhat obscure the simple structure of the 1524 work. It begins with an analysis of eight 'advantages' of confession, which highlight the moral as well as the spiritual benefits to be gained. There follow nine 'evils' or 'disadvantages,' five of them attributable to confessors and the rest to penitents. Erasmus then indicates how attitudes might be changed for the better, first addressing the confessors (and their ecclesiastical superiors) and then the penitents, before suggesting some procedural reforms and discussing briefly the technical questions of restitution and satisfaction. Throughout the work Erasmus uses the well-worn image of the priest as physician to the soul to emphasize the consolatory and curative functions of penance.

* * * * *

23 *Apologia ad Stunicae conclusiones* LB IX 389B–D; the 1522 reply is at 369C (*Apologia adversus Stunicae Blasphemiae*). On Erasmus and Zúñiga generally, see Rummel I 145–77 (172–3 on the *Conclusiones*).

24 In LB the 1530 additions make up roughly ten columns out of the final total of twenty-four. The additions are studied later in this introduction and in M.J. Heath 'Confession and Concession: the Texts of Erasmus's *Exomologesis*' in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Cantabrigensis: Proceedings of the Eleventh International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Cambridge, 2000* ed Rhoda Schnur et al (Tempe, Ariz 2003) 263–70. Jean-Pierre Massaut knew of the additions, but made little use of them in an article which posits the consistency of Erasmus' middle way between traditionalism and Lutheran reforms: 'La position "œcuménique" d'Erasme sur la pénitence' in *Réforme et humanisme: Actes du 4e colloque* ed Jean Boisset (Montpellier 1977) 241–81.

The title *Exomologesis* ('open declaration') echoes the Greek verb used in the New Testament to mean confession, to God or man, either of one's sins (Matt 3:6) or of God's greatness (Rom 14:11).[25] For Erasmus the word thus has desirable overtones of an act of worship as well as of contrition. The subtitle *Modus confitendi* (*The Manner of Confessing*) is perhaps ironical, since it is the title of a succinct and very popular manual of confession by Andreas de Escobar, which is not much more than 'a handy list of sins with some brief thoughts on forgiveness and repentance' – just the sort of book that Erasmus condemns for fostering anxiety or scrupulosity in the penitent.[26] He had pointed out to Lee that his real objections were indeed to the 'manner of confessing' rather than to the sacrament of penance itself.[27] This change of emphasis enabled subsequent critics to challenge Erasmus' views on matters of procedure as well as the other contentious topics.

The critics had some justification. In the *Exomologesis* Erasmus satirizes the extraordinarily compendious discussions of procedural questions by theologians and canon lawyers and the countless manuals for confessors, practical, conservative, and authoritative, which set out in detail the role of both confessor and penitent.[28] Erasmus' main target in the *Exomologesis* is the perceived inadequacy of the clergy; but that was also, explicitly or implicitly, the target of many of these manuals, and their advice is not so very different from Erasmus'. He echoes their complaints about the insecurity of the confessional, or the intimacy of the questioning, and joins them in condemning the greed of confessors seeking a rapid turnover. Sometimes they

* * * * *

25 For the range of meaning and the earliest use of the word by the Fathers Cyprian and Tertullian, see Crichton 23; McNeil 10–11; E.F. Latko 'Auricular Confession' NCE 4 131.

26 Tentler *Sin* 40. Escobar's abridgment of a full-length manual was among the most frequently printed books of the fifteenth century, and also appeared in even briefer form, sometimes as a one-page 'shopping list.' It claims on the first page to contain 'almost every sin.' Luther probably had it in mind in his attack on scholastic distinctions in *Confitendi ratio* (LW 39 36–7).

27 *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72 369–72

28 They are exhaustively studied by Pierre Michaud-Quantin *Sommes de casuistique et manuels de confession au moyen âge* (XII–XVI siècles) (Louvain, Lille, and Montreal 1962). See also Tentler *Sin* 28–53. The notes to the text below give references to three manuals, already mentioned, which are characteristic of the genre: Escobar's brief enumeration, Clavasio's alphabetical encyclopedia of 'cases of conscience' and Rosemondt's contemporary yet traditional study of the sacrament in all its aspects.

go further than Erasmus: Rosemondt, for example, suggests remedies 'if the priest falls asleep or mishears.'[29]

We do not know how many of the manuals Erasmus had read. In the *Exomologesis* he names only one of his predecessors, Jean Gerson, whom he accuses of sowing unease in many a conscience with his book on nocturnal emissions. Erasmus is a little unfair: Gerson had earned the title of the Consoling Doctor, and frequently expressed reservations about the inflexibility of confessional practices.[30] He clearly shared Erasmus' views about the moral value of penance, since he took the most common medieval definition of contrition ('Contrition is sorrow for sins voluntarily assumed with the intention of confessing and doing satisfaction') and added 'and with the intention and desire of abstaining from sins.'[31] The contents of most of the manuals prove that if the system of penance were practised according to their principles, the primary subject of the exercise would be the individual's conscience; the sacrament would offer consolation at least as much as discipline. The medieval theorists seem to have been as aware as Erasmus of the damage done to these salutary principles by the human frailty of both confessors and penitents.

If Erasmus expected the *Exomologesis* to silence his critics, he was quickly disabused. His apparent willingness now to submit to ecclesiastical discipline earned him the contempt of some Reformers, including Johannes Oecolampadius and Guillaume Farel,[32] though he was heartened by the reaction from England, where his arguments endorsing those of Henry VIII's book against Luther had apparently helped to re-establish the proper practice of confession.[33] From Paris, however, came reproaches from Noël Béda, and from Antwerp indirect attacks by Jacques Masson (Jacobus Latomus) in his book *De confessione secreta*.[34]

* * * * *

29 Rosemondt f 133 verso

30 See for example Tentler *Sin* 145–7 and 308–11. Erasmus names Gerson only in an addition made in 1530. Luther was more sympathetic to Gerson in his *Confitendi ratio* (LW 39 40).

31 Tentler *Sin* 235 (citing no less than twelve authorities who quote this standard definition) and 238.

32 Epp 1523:118–26 and 1582:95–6 with n14. Oecolampadius thought that the *Exomologesis* was an attack on his own *De confessione* (1521), but Erasmus had not read it.

33 See Ep 1582:95–110.

34 See Rummel II 10–12; Epp 1579 and 1581:459–60 with n58. Ostensibly, Masson was attacking Oecolampadius, but the latter was convinced that the true target

But the most violent criticism of the *Exomologesis* came once more from the theologians of Louvain, four of whom (all Dominicans) seem to have contributed to a pamphlet that appeared at Antwerp in March 1525 under the fictitious name Godefridus Ruysius Taxander. Erasmus drafted a reply, *Manifesta mendacia* (*Manifest Lies*), which remained unpublished, perhaps because Clement VII and Charles V both responded at about this time to Erasmus' plea to intervene on his behalf with the Louvain theologians.[35] But Erasmus was clearly stung by the book and fumed about it to numerous correspondents.[36] *Manifesta mendacia* repeats much of Erasmus' earlier defence of his views on the origins and necessity of confession, which were still apparently too ambiguous for the theologians. The new element is a vigorous defence of his analysis of confessional procedure. The Dominicans took particular offence at the enumeration of nine 'disadvantages' and only eight 'advantages' of modern confession; in this case, at least, Erasmus was happy to redress the balance in 1530.[37] They also complained that Erasmus' scurrilous examples of bad confessors would contribute to bringing the priesthood and the sacrament into disrepute; Erasmus replied that on the contrary he considered such examples salutary.

Similar criticisms resurfaced in the next full-blown attack on Erasmus' book, this time from the 'Spanish monks.' In his reply, published early in 1528,[38] Erasmus makes the clearest possible statement of his personal acceptance of confession as now practised, with all its accessories, such as reserved cases, enumeration of the kind, species, and circumstances of sins, and 'anything else of this kind' – though perhaps this last phrase contains a hint of irony. He also states more forcefully than ever his willingness but

* * * * *

was often Erasmus. Erasmus refers to Masson again in *Manifesta mendacia* (see next note and CWE 71 116).

35 On Clement's role, see Myers 'Humanism' 372. The pamphlet, whose title page is reproduced in CWE 11 250, also attacks Erasmus' *De esu carnium*. *Manifest Lies* has been translated by Erika Rummel in CWE 71 114–31; see also her articles in *Renaissance Quarterly* 43 (1990) 731–43 and *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Hafniensis* ed R. Schnur (Binghamton 1994) 179–86. I am grateful to Dr Rummel for supplying a draft of the Latin text prepared for publication in ASD and transcribed from the autograph manuscript in Copenhagen.

36 See for example, from 1525, Epp 1571:70–4, 1581A:132–72, 1582 passim, 1585: 71–7, and 1600:40–50. The insult still rankled as late as 1534 (Allen Ep 2956:32).

37 See *Manifesta mendacia* 122 no 25 and book 1 35–6 below. Erasmus returned to the fray in the *Responsio ad epistolam Alberti Pii* (CWE 84 71), arguing that he had enumerated the disadvantages to enable them to be remedied.

38 *Apologia adversus monachos* LB IX 1062E–1064B; see Rummel II 92–6.

inability to ascribe the institution of modern confession to Christ, and his conviction of its value if properly performed. His exposure of corrupt practices does no more, he claims, than confirm what everyone knows to be true; but he insists, somewhat disingenuously, that he has drawn attention to the evils surrounding confession, by which mortals thwart the good it can do, rather than to the intrinsic disadvantages of the institution itself.[39] Thinking of the news from England, he claims that his book, far from damaging confession, has reconciled many who were contemplating throwing off its yoke. He used this argument again in 1528, in reply to mild reproaches from Alonso Fernández; he pointed out to him the difficulty of writing a book on confession at Basel in 1524, in the midst of clamour for reform.[40] A little later he summarized the same arguments to assuage the doubts of John Longland, the friendly bishop of Lincoln, and also assured the archbishop of Cologne that his aim was to make confession 'more sincere and less anxious.'[41]

In his additions to the 1530 *Exomologesis* Erasmus went as far as he could to placate if not reconcile both sets of opponents. However, he stood by his original text to the extent that he made deletions only for stylistic reasons. At the outset he not only added, quite accurately, that even Lutherans considered confession salutary, but also stressed that he personally practised confession and upheld the tradition of reconciliation to God through a priest (20). He could only emphasize his attachment to the institution by attacking both those who would abolish it and those who besmirched it by corrupt practices. Here he came closer than ever to acknowledging the divine origin of the sacrament: 'I am more inclined towards the party that believes that it was instituted by Christ,' though he still lacks conclusive proof (22–3). He then made a very long addition to his discussion of the first 'advantage' of confession, its humbling of human pride. A lesson for his opponents, perhaps? But the detailed comparison here of public penance in the early church and solemn penance in the modern church suggests a new attempt to identify an historical continuity with more apostolic times; unusually, Erasmus admits the utility of 'certain external rites and ceremonies' as a path towards charity (26–7). Apart from a few extra illustrations, the next long addition is a measured attack

* * * * *

39 See 38–9 and n79 below on the unreliability of this claim.

40 Epp 1904 (from Fernández) and 1969; Erasmus had already used the last argument in a reply to the theologians of Louvain (Ep 1582:107–10). On Fernández see CEBR II 23–4.

41 Epp 2037 and 1976

on scrupulosity, exposing further a danger acknowledged by the manuals of confession (31). Erasmus now introduced the required 'ninth advantage' of confession but, as well as giving arithmetical balance, the passage injects a vibrant sense of the liberation and reconciliation to be found in the sacrament (35–6). Having answered the Dominicans, Erasmus next added a scathing portrait of the evil confessor clinging to his materialistic privileges in a passage that was more likely to gladden the Reformers (44–5). So too was a long addition on faith and charity, contrasted with external works of satisfaction, where Erasmus went so far as to include one of Luther's characteristic arguments against ritual confession (55–7).[42] The penultimate addition is a relatively anodyne passage of familiar social satire, illustrating the need for restitution by exposing the tricks of the retail trade (62–6). It has little theological content – except that it appears to conceal an attack on Erasmus' Catholic critics in the guise of crooked wine merchants.[43] Finally the rather abrupt conclusion of 1524, a brief complaint about pilgrimages, is expanded by a lengthy development on the pitfalls of satisfaction or reparation. In 1530 the treatise ended with a recapitulation, for the less experienced, of the remedies against the nine 'disadvantages'; like some other additions, it reinforces the pastoral aspect of Erasmus' treatise. In expanding his book, Erasmus was even-handed towards his opponents, but above all he continued to pursue a median line, acknowledging the discipline of the church whilst promoting the consolatory functions of the sacrament.

This modestly conciliatory tone may reflect a general calming of the controversy, since in the Augsburg Confession of 1530 Melanchthon asserted that the Lutherans had retained the sacrament of penance, along with baptism and the Eucharist. They had not abolished confession and the priest's absolution, though they had reduced their function to that of arousing in the sinner faith or confidence in God's mercy. It seemed that even convinced predestinarians, by retaining an ecclesiastical rite of forgiveness or reconciliation, assigned (for practical purposes) some kind of work for the penitent to do, however committed their theologies to human impotence and iniquity. Later, Calvin too acknowledged the pastoral value of private confession but denied it sacramental status.[44]

* * * * *

42 See n144 to the text.

43 See n168 to the text.

44 *Augsburg Confession* 11.12.15 and Calvin *Institutes* 3.14 and 4.19.16, cited by P. Palmer in NCE 11 76–7; for a full discussion of the Reformers' views and

Did Erasmus, after a decade of struggle, finally convince some of his Catholic critics? Agostino Steuco, writing in 1531 to commend him, albeit half-heartedly, for his recantation over confession, had perhaps read the new edition. Steuco's *Adversus Lutheranos* deals at length with confession, and he complains that his task has not been eased by Erasmus' blackening of confessors, even if the latter has now – apparently – abandoned his notorious opinions. Steuco still holds such inflammatory ideas responsible for the overthrow of monastic life in certain regions.[45] In the same year Maarten Lips wrote from Lens to say that he had not heard the *Exomologesis* decried for some time, though the *Moria*, *Colloquia*, and *De esu carnium* were still often reviled.[46] Although the Sorbonne kept up the attack on the portrayal of confession in the *Colloquia*,[47] by 1533 Erasmus could conclude one of his last reflections on confession with the expectation that both sides would await the decision of a general synod concerning the divine institution of confession.[48] Finally and fittingly, Erasmus returned to the pre-eminently consolatory function of the sacrament in the *De praeparatione ad mortem* of 1534.[49]

The decision of the general synod came of course at Trent, where it was decreed that confession is indeed of divine origin and necessary for salvation by divine law; an anathema was pronounced against anyone claiming that secret confession is a human invention. The power of the keys and absolution by the priest were upheld.[50] The decrees of Trent were maintained

* * * * *

practices, see Tentler *Sin* 349–63. The Augsburg Confession (1530) was the confession of faith, drawn up by Philippus Melanchthon and presented to the emperor Charles V, which stated the fundamental Lutheran position on the articles of the Christian faith and demanded the remedy of abuses in the church; among the demands was the abolition of compulsory confession. See 'Augsburg Confession' in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation* ed Hans J. Hillerbrand (New York 1996) 1 93–7.

45 Ep 2513:394–455. Steuco's tone is suspicious; he wonders whether Erasmus has changed his mind – or just his language. See also Rummel II 136–7 on Steuco's hostility.

46 Ep 2566; on Lips see CEBR II 333–4.

47 Erasmus provides the by now familiar replies in his *Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas* of 1532 (CWE 82 1–326).

48 In *De concordia* CWE 65; see the analysis of the whole passage, which recapitulates familiar arguments, but now without passion, in Payne 209.

49 CWE 70

50 See Spykman 114–221; and Myers *Sinning* 107–13. The decrees and canons are in Denzinger 1668–93 and 1701–15. On the keys, see 34 n67.

until 2 December 1973, when a new *Ordo penitentiae* was issued by the Vatican, in which a clear shift in emphasis is evident from absolution towards reconciliation in a broader sense,[51] a move that Erasmus would surely have found congenial.

Exomologesis was written during a brief period when reform of the sacrament along humanist lines seemed possible and even imminent. The work advocates essentially the transformation of a judgmental and dogmatic institution, represented by 'innumerable labyrinthine questions' (18), into a flexible pastoral instrument, in which the conscience of the sinner is to be guided and consoled by a counsellor intent on moral improvement rather than retribution; the result for penitents is self-knowledge and a 'genuine hatred of their crimes' (74). Erasmus' insistence on the simile of the physician, at the expense of the equally traditional judicial imagery revived in particular by the decrees of Trent, found an echo in a number of attempts among reforming Catholics in the 1520s and 1530s to humanize the institution and to restore its usefulness in Christian life.[52] In one sense the work is aimed at Erasmus' Catholic critics, a defence against charges of Lutheranism; but in a wider sense *Exomologesis* was directed at all those, beginning perhaps with Pope Clement himself,[53] who might be persuaded of the immense pastoral and psychological benefits to be gained from reforms in procedure and in the training and attitude of confessors. For Erasmus mercy and consolation were always to be preferred to judgment and retribution, and a sacrament embodying these virtues was most likely to rescue penance from the Reformers' attempts to undermine it.

The *Exomologesis* was published in 1524 by Johann Froben at Basel and by Michaël Hillen at Antwerp; two further editions appeared at Basel, the

* * * * *

51 See Crichton's *Ministry of Reconciliation*; the book contains an English translation of the *Ordo* together with a commentary. The new Order maintains, as did the Council of Trent (Denzinger 1670), that the origin of the sacrament lies in John 20:21–3 (Crichton 92). For a contrasting commentary, highlighting continuity in the evolution of the sacrament into the present century, see Rahner.

52 See Myers 'Humanism' 378–82 on reforms in Cologne and Verona; W. de Boer *The Conquest of the Soul: Confession, Discipline and Public Order in Counter-Reformation Milan* (Leiden 2001), which deals also with other parts of Italy; V. Lavenia *Tributi, pene e confessione nella teologia morale della prima et à moderna* (Bologna 2004), which draws particular attention to Erasmus' use of the medical analogy.

53 Myers ('Humanism' 372) suggests ingeniously that the new text was designed to 'please the pontiff and flatter the Medici family,' not least by means of the medical similes.

first undated and the second the expanded edition of 1530. There was another printing at Paris in 1534. A French translation by Claudius Cantiuncula (Claude Chansonnette) was published at Basel on 26 April 1524, more or less simultaneously with the Latin.[54] An anonymous English translation of the 1530 text, printed in London by John Byddell, appeared in the 1530s.[55]

The text translated here is that of LB V 145–70, checked against the first edition (Basel: Froben 1524), the revised edition (Basel: Froben 1530) and the Basel *Opera omnia* of 1540. Significant differences between the texts of 1524 and 1530 are indicated in the notes. Translations of Scripture are my own, as no English version exactly matches Erasmus' text.

I am grateful to the Leverhulme Trust for the award of a Senior Research Fellowship which enabled me to undertake this work.

MJH

* * * * *

54 The French text is in E. Droz *Chemins de l'hérésie* (Geneva 1970) I 10–41; it was revised and republished, with a new epistle, by Etienne Dolet at Lyon in 1542. On Cantiuncula, who also translated More's *Utopia* into German in 1524, see Epp 852 and 1841 (eulogies by Dorp and Erasmus); CEBR I 259–61.

55 British Library C 110 b 31; *A lytle treatise of the maner and forme of confession, made by the most excellent and famous clerke, M. Eras. of Roterdame* (London: Iohan Byddell [1535?]). The translation is generally accurate if somewhat wordy, and the translator identifies some scriptural references in the margins. For a study of all the translations, see M.J. Heath 'Translation and Transmission: the Case of Erasmus' *Exomologesis*' in *Court and Humour in the French Renaissance: Essays in Honour of Professor Pauline Smith* ed Sarah Alyn Stacey (Oxford and New York 2009).

DESIDERIUS ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM TO THE REVEREND FATHER FRANÇOIS DU MOULIN, BISHOP DESIGNATE OF CONDOM, GREETING[1]

When he delivered your letter, most honoured prelate, which was full of a rare sincerity and exceptional kindliness towards myself, my man Hilarius[2] really brought me in full measure the cheerfulness that his name suggests. And so, since you have been so kind as to tell me how things are in your part of the world, it seemed right for me in my turn not to leave you in ignorance of what I was engaged on here when your letter reached me. Horace, when pondering the things that pertain to living well, uses the words 'I put together and lay up in store what I may later use.'[3] I have a better right to use these lines, for at that moment I was wholly engaged in preparations for a virtuous death. That is the most important chapter in philosophy, and the most serious. It is of course something that everyone should be considering all their life long, but somehow or other we are most of us Phrygians,[4] and nothing but blows will make us mend our ways. An affliction of the kidneys, from which I have often suffered before, attacked me so severely last July that I had seriously to consider my departure hence;[5] but around Christmas it set about me so severely that I despaired of living and actually prayed for death.[6]

The stone is a merciless and rude remembrance, more cruel than death itself. Even so I owe it a debt, or it would be truer to say I owe it through the stone to the Lord Jesus, for making me now give careful thought to the question how not to be overtaken by death in a state of unreadiness, even if it has not given me space for my *Exomologesis*,[7] which I now send you as a kind of appendix to my letter to you. If you think your letter well repaid, I shall have good reason to be delighted, for I know that nothing

* * * * *

1 The dedicatory letter is Ep 1426. On Du Moulin, see Allen and CWE; CEBR I 411. He had been nominated to the vacant see of Condom in 1521, but was in fact ousted after litigation by a rival candidate. He died in 1526. Erasmus added the word 'designate' in 1530.

2 Bertholf (Ep 1384 n31); the letter in question is not extant.

3 *Epistles* 1.1.12

4 That is, we learn wisdom too late; *Adagia* I i 28.

5 See Ep 1376 n4.

6 See Ep 1408 n2.

7 This is the text in Allen and CWE, but as Allen's variants record, the edition of 1530 added the word *supremae* 'final' (maintained in the 1540 *Opera* and in LB), which implies that Erasmus had not had time to make his own final confession when he thought he was in danger of death.

I can do for you can ever requite your feelings towards me. Come then, most excellent prelate, let us in the meantime enjoy each other's company in the Lord after this fashion, until the days of peace return and allow a closer intimacy. Farewell.

Basel, 24 February AD 1524

EXOMOLOGESIS, OR THE MANNER OF CONFESSING[1]

Alongside the innumerable labyrinthine questions[2] on which scholars also laboured years ago – the power of the keys, restitution, satisfaction, indulgences – I see that now a good many have begun to investigate whether this[3] confession of sins, by which nowadays each one of us annually lays bare the wounds of our conscience to a priest, and[4] which most people call sacramental while some make it part of a sacrament, was established by the Holy Scriptures or instituted by Christ in person – in which case it cannot under any circumstances be abolished by mere mortals – or whether it was established by our forefathers but has gradually acquired such strength that its authority is as great as if Christ had instituted it, especially since it has been backed by the authority of the Roman pontiff and the general approval of

* * * * *

1 LB V 145–70

2 An allusion to scholasticism. Many medieval theologians, including St Bonaventure and St Thomas Aquinas, debated *quaestiones* based on the *Sententiae* of Peter Lombard (d 1164), which inspired innumerable commentaries in the later Middle Ages; cf Erasmus' disparaging remarks in the prefatory letter to the *Enchiridion* CWE 66 9–10 (Ep 858:35–84). The four topics Erasmus cites are discussed at length by Lombard *Sententiae* book 4 dist 14–22 and Aquinas *Summa theologiae* III q 84–90 and *Supplementum* q 1–28. Erasmus discusses the last three towards the end of this tract; on the keys, see 34 n67 below.

3 Erasmus carefully uses the demonstrative to denote the modern form of confession, as he points out to his critics in the *Apologia adversus Stunicae Blasphemiae* (LB IX 389B) and in the opening lines of *Manifesta mendacia* (CWE 71 116).

4 and which ... in person] In 1524 Erasmus wrote 'and which they call sacramental, was instituted by Christ.' In 1530 he expanded the text to include his own view; later in this work he distinguishes between 'sacramental confession' (eg 30 below) and the 'sacrament of penance' (eg 43 below), of which confession is a part. He had established this position in *Manifesta mendacia* CWE 71 122 no 23 and *Apologia adversus monachos* LB IX 1062E.

the Christian people.[5] Then, if one accepts that it was established by mere mortals, they ask whether it would be advisable to leave it alone, in view of the numerous and obvious advantages that are derived from it, or to abolish it, because of the numerous and manifest evils that we understand this practice brings, for which both penitents and confessors are to blame.

Reader, you can expect no such debate in this little book, both because these questions have already been carefully discussed by men of great learning, and because I have no wish at the moment to open up such fresh sores in areas that are already inflamed. It is no time to 'touch the untouchable,'[6] but rather, as Plato advised, to 'make the best of what you have.'[7] For however strongly one side may contend, with a plethora of weighty arguments, that this form of confession was not instituted by the Lord Jesus in person, and that such a heavy burden or[8] heroic task (so to speak), should not have been imposed by a mere mortal on his fellows, at least it cannot be denied that someone who has confessed properly to a capable priest is safer than before.[9]

Even[10] those who defend Luther's teachings admit that it is salutary and not at all to be despised. Although I can offer neither conclusive scriptural

* * * * *

5 This hesitation over the origins of confession was the main bone of contention between Erasmus and Catholic critics of the *Exomologesis*; see the introductory note 13. The Protestant Reformers universally denied that annual confession was instituted by Christ, making it a purely human law; Myers 'Humanism' 364.

6 Erasmus quotes in Greek a proverbial expression found in Herodotus 6.134.

7 Cf *Adagia* II v 1. Erasmus quotes in Greek a stock phrase found for example in Lucian *Menippus* 21; the exact words do not appear in Plato, though a similar idea found in *Gorgias* 449C is used in *Adagia* II ix 33 and IV ii 43 (see CWE 33 238 and n11).

8 or heroic ... speak] Added in 1530. Luther condemned the 'heavy and unbearable burdens' placed upon penitents by mere mortals in his *Confitendi ratio* of 1520 (LW 39 46).

9 Erasmus insists on the utility of confession, but in a way that might not have displeased Luther, which is no doubt why he added the next paragraph in 1530. He had pursued the same line in defending his annotation on Acts 19 against Edward Lee, rejecting Lee's 'illogical' contention that one confessed 'more truly' as well as 'more safely' using this form; *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72 362–4.

10 Even those who ... the church] Added in 1530. This addition of 1530 could refer to Melanchthon's retention of the confessional and of absolution in articles 11 and 12 of the Augsburg Confession, published in that year; see Mark A. Noll *Confessions and Catechisms of the Reformation* (Leicester 1991) 90–1. But in 1520 Luther himself had described confession as 'most salutary' if stripped of corrupt practices (*Confitendi ratio* LW 39 40 and 46).

evidence nor irrefutable arguments to persuade the stubborn that this form of confession – I mean the one currently in use – was instituted by Christ or even by the apostles, I do think that it should be scrupulously practised by all the faithful, at the very least as a rite brought to its present state by the leading men of the church, not without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.[11] The others, who teach that confession is not a necessity, must decide for themselves whether they are well advised to do so. But if my mind were burdened with a mortal sin, I should not dare to approach the Lord's table or to await my last day without being reconciled to God through a priest according to the long-accepted custom of the church.[12]

It is thus beyond dispute that this form of confession is for many reasons highly salutary, provided that it is performed properly by the two participants, both the one who seeks healing for the soul through confession, and the one who is consulted as a kind of spiritual physician.[13] But I thought it useful to discuss briefly some ways in which the greatest possible benefit can be derived from confession and the least possible evil be brought into it. Of course it is obvious that the evils arise not so much from the rite itself as from human mischief-making. There is almost nothing in human life so holy, pious, and (one might say) heavenly that people cannot turn it into a plague on themselves by their perverse misbehaviour.

* * * * *

11 Erasmus had used this retort against Lee in 1520, but had been more forthright then in his denial: 'We do not read that private confession was instituted by Christ' (*Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72 362). However, in the colloquy *Confabulatio pia* the boy Gaspar sidesteps this question and leaves it to the theologians to decide (CWE 39 97).

12 The last sentence of this paragraph echoes a remark in Ep 2136 to Ludwig Baer in 1529 (lines 110–16). Erasmus distances himself from Luther and replies to the allegation of 'Taxander' that he is undermining the church's authority (*Manifesta mendacia* CWE 71 124 no 31), as he had earlier to similar criticism from Lee (*Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72 368–9) and Zúñiga (*Apologia ad Stunicae conclusiones* [LB IX 389D], where he exhorts his opponent to 'go off and read Luther' to appreciate the difference!).

13 The medical simile is commonplace in writings on penance, though destined soon to lose ground to judicial language in official Catholic accounts (cf Rosemondt f 2; McNeil 44–6; Tentler *Sin* 157–8; Myers 'Humanism' 371–3). It goes back to the Gospels but was given particular point by Origen, one of the earliest advocates of spontaneous confession, who urged self-accusation 'since some are almost choked by their peccant humours' (*Homilia super psalmum 37* PG 12 1386). The image of Christ as physician was also developed by the Fathers; for a bibliography, see Carole Straw *Gregory the Great* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 1988) 153 n21.

In[14] truth I thoroughly disapprove of the kind of people who seek to abolish something that is good in itself simply because of human failings, when it would be better to try to cure them. Until now those who have discussed this question seem to have concentrated their efforts on explaining the most common species and kinds of sins,[15] and they have addressed themselves to penitents and not to confessors as well, although that would be particularly desirable, especially these days, when it is sadly obvious that the majority of monks and priests have sunk so low that they frequently outdo the ignorant people in their own ignorance and moral depravity. I have therefore attempted to advise both parties, those who hear confessions as well as those who make them, on how to perform their duty in order to derive abundant benefit from this excellent institution.

Now some believe that this form of confession was instituted by Christ, while others hesitate. Some, though considering it a purely human institution, still practise it no less scrupulously than if Christ had spoken the words that instituted it. Others think it arbitrary but still argue, as I have said, that it is not to be despised, since it can be salutary. I have prepared this little book for all of them. I disagree entirely with those who teach that it is arbitrary.[16] In this little book I neither agree nor disagree with those who contend that it was instituted by mere mortals, but I am more inclined towards

* * * * *

14 In truth I thoroughly disapprove . . . better results] These two paragraphs were added in 1530.

15 A reference both to the penitentials, handbooks for confessors, which proliferated from the sixth century, when auricular confession became established, and to the more wide-ranging summae or manuals of confession which succeeded them. In both types of manuals penances were graded according to the nature of the sin and, usually, the station in life of the sinner. On their utility and the complaints about them, especially from Reformers, see Tentler *Sin* 134–40. An example of the scholastic classification of sins would be Peter Lombard's discussion of lying, in which he identifies three kinds (*genera*) or broad categories (the 'white' lie, the jocular lie, and the malicious lie), and eight species, subcategories that scrutinize intentions and results more closely; *Sententiae* book 3 dist 38 c 1, based essentially on St Augustine *De mendacio* 14. Rosemondt exemplifies the copiousness of these discussions; he has 24 pages (ff 8–19) on the species of pride and no less than 86 (ff 73–116) on those of avarice.

16 That is, optional. The sixteenth-century English translator glosses Erasmus' *arbitrariam*: 'that is to say, not of necessite, but standynge in man's wyll and pleasure to do it, or leve it undone' (A verso; see introductory note 15 n55 above). Erasmus underlines his dissent from Luther in this passage added in 1530 (see 22 n17 below).

the party that believes that it was instituted by Christ; I shall be ready and willing to defend that view when I have been equipped with the righteous armour of Scripture and authoritative proof, to avoid making the case worse if I do not succeed in my attempt.[17] For it is not much use merely to make assertions; the Catholic teacher must win the argument by using clear evidence from the Scriptures. 'Anyone who feared they might not win sat still.'[18] It is better to leave the case intact for others than to make it worse by handling it badly. Therefore I shall leave to others a task that requires a true champion and content myself with a mere foot-slogger's role; I shall just mention a few things that will ensure that confession produces better results.[19]

In the interests of clarity, I shall first outline the many advantages of this form of confession. Next[20] I shall show how it can on occasion blight true religion among us. Then I shall discuss some ways of reaping the benefits and avoiding the pitfalls. Finally, I shall deal with all the other matters relating to the duties of confessor and penitent. I[21] imagine that my efforts will seem less helpful to confessors than to penitents, but I expect both parties to take it in good part if, by the nature of the subject, certain things emerge that do little to soothe human sensitivities. You should expect sound advice, not pleasant conversation, from a doctor.

* * * * *

17 Erasmus reiterates (in 1530) his defence against critics who had reproached him for not asserting that the present form of the sacrament was instituted by Christ; see *Manifesta mendacia* 116 and *Apologia adversus monachos* LB IX 1063A and 1064A. But in 1520, replying to Lee, Erasmus had gone to some lengths to discredit such theories, being particularly hard on Lee's allegorization of Luke 17:14, though Lee was by no means the first to use it; see *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72–8; Payne 182–3; Tentler *Sin* 57. In the *Apologia ad Stunicae conclusiones* (LB IX 389C) he pointed out the impracticality of auricular confession in apostolic times, when a single bishop and a few priests had to cater for a numerous congregation.

18 Horace *Epistles* 1.17.37. This and the two preceding sentences were recommended for deletion in the *Index expurgatorius* LB X 1820A.

19 Payne (189–90) finds the passage on the institution of confession unexpectedly conciliatory and 'not quite candid' in the light of Erasmus' other pronouncements in the 1520s, but it is in fact consistent enough with Erasmus' later views, as expressed for example in a passage from the *De concordia* (1533; CWE 205–6) cited by Payne.

20 Next I shall ... among us] This clause was recommended for deletion in the *Index expurgatorius* LB X 1820A, as was the passage on confessional practice (see 37 n75 below) to which it refers.

21 I imagine that ... doctor] This defensive passage was added in 1530.

Thus the first and principal advantage[22] to be derived from the confession of sins is, I think, that there is no better or more effective way to break down our intellectual arrogance, the stiff-necked pride[23] that makes us oppose God; unless we make great efforts to repress it, it will ultimately stand opposed to everything that is worshipped or spoken of as God. For the source of all impiety is, and has always been, that we think ourselves something when we are nothing. It was this that hurled down Lucifer and his wretched band, since he claimed as his own the gifts that God's goodness had freely bestowed on him. Rising up against the majesty of his creator, he was flung headlong to the depths as he plotted to scale the heights; after finding so much to admire in himself, he became the lowest of the low.[24] And it was through his prompting and example that the first founders of the human race, having tasted the fruit of the forbidden tree, tried to become like gods, and were expelled from Paradise. Lucifer was an intelligence at once noble, immortal, and incorporeal, endowed with gifts we can scarcely conceive. But since he would not bow to the one from whom he had received every blessing he enjoyed, and compared to whom he was nothing, he fell, irredeemably. How much less fitting is it that we humans, in our infinitely lower estate, should be stiff-necked and oppose God, by whom we were made and without whom we have nothing and can do nothing? Yet this canker is deeply implanted in the human mind, and the cunning serpent unceasingly exploits this disease[25] of ours to drag anyone he can to the spot from which he fell.

Just as arrogance and self-confidence have always been the first steps on the road to impiety, so the first steps towards recovery are total self-abasement and submission to God. Now there can be no more complete submission than for someone voluntarily to fall prostrate at another's feet and to divulge to him not only his deeds, but even his most secret thoughts.[26]

* * * * *

22 Here Erasmus begins the first part of *Exomologesis*, which consists of the nine advantages of confession (though he admits they are in fact 'innumerable') and nine 'evils that seem to arise from the practice of confession, although,' as he makes clear, 'the blame lies with us rather than the institution itself.' See 37.

23 *cervix erecta*, a phrase with biblical overtones (eg Jer 7:26, 17:23) though not a quotation

24 Cf Isa 14:12–13.

25 The 'cunning serpent' echoes Gen 3:1. A misprint in the 1524 edition reads *lucem* 'light' instead of *luem* 'disease.'

26 Erasmus appears to accept the requirement (Tentler *Sin* 153–6) to confess sinful thoughts, which Luther denounced as an innovation introduced by 'avaricious,

All the more so is submission necessary since some deeds and thoughts may be the sort that are deeply shaming to admit, whilst others are the kind that could put their life in grave danger when disclosed to a person who may one day, through folly, drink, spite, or illness, divulge what he has heard. Just think how arrogant and insolent some people are by nature! Again, think of all the pride that worldly success engenders in others, such as the rich or handsome, princes, scholars, actors, or anyone else rising above the rest of us by some mark of distinction. Such people must do great violence to their self-esteem when the fear of God and the desire for salvation make them swallow all their pride[27] and cast themselves at the feet of a priest, a person generally regarded by the world as lowly and contemptible; they must reveal to him, as to a spiritual physician, all the festering wounds in their hearts and the open sores in their consciences. But when, as humans and for God's sake, they humble themselves in this way before a man, they are raised up and magnified before God.

Unless the haughty spirit within us be broken, the gentle spirit of Jesus Christ cannot enter, since it dwells only with the humble and mild and those who tremble at his words. I have heard learned and godly men claim in casual conversation that they have often received more enlightenment and heavenly grace from making a full confession than from anything else, even though it were made to a humble and ill-educated priest, so[28] effective is self-abasement as a means of placating divine anger. The Ninevites were threatened with imminent destruction, but they submitted to the prophet who threatened them, betook themselves to sackcloth and ashes, and soon God's rigorous sentence was changed into mercy.[29] Similarly their barbaric king came down from his lofty throne and sat in the ashes, put on sackcloth

* * * * *

inquisitive or tyrannical prelates' and unknown to the early church (LW 39 32–3). See for example Escobar (a 2 recto), who places *cogitatio* first in his roll-call of sins, and the famous Latin poem on confession attributed to Peter of Blois, *Poeniteas cito*: 'Declare, besides your deeds, those that you wanted to commit' (PL 207 1154C); on the popularity of this very representative poem, see Tentler *Sin* 47–8.

27 Literally 'lower their crests'; cf *Adagia* I viii 69.

28 so effective ... Pride is demented] Added in 1530. The indictment of human pride and insistence upon the value of submission to the priest in this substantial addition to the discussion of the 'first advantage' (to 23–9 below) suggest a further effort by Erasmus to distance himself from Luther (eg *The Sacrament of Penance* LW 35 3–22 on the relatively minor role of the priest in confession).

29 The story is told in the book of Jonah.

instead of purple and, instead of the menacing noises that kings usually make, he uttered prayers to God, saying: 'Who can tell if God will turn and forgive us?'[30]

God opposes the proud, but he has never despised a humble and a contrite heart.[31] Being contrite, it will not stiffen or swell but, if mixed with a few moist tears, it can take on any shape, like damp clay or dough, beneath the guiding hand of its maker.[32] If you have humbled your heart before God, it will be no hardship to submit to a priest. By sinning you stiffened your neck against God and bowed to the devil's yoke; are you now reluctant to submit to a minister and vicar of God? When, lured by the attractions of sin, you put your head into Satan's noose, that was the time to remember your pride, not now, when, just in time, you are struggling free in order to be raised from the pit toward heaven. If you have a sore somewhere on your body, you obey the physician and uncover it, however embarrassing it may be; when your mind is reeling from so many wounds, is it so hard to have them examined briefly by a physician of the soul?

Those who minister to the poor do not say to themselves: 'How lowly is this person I am now serving.' No, they say: 'How great is the one for whom I am performing this duty.' Similarly, those going to the priest should take no heed of his status in the eyes of the world, but should say to themselves: 'How great is the one he represents, and how great the power entrusted to him, more exalted by far than a king's or an emperor's!' If some beggar[33] can relieve your fever, then no matter how distinguished you may be, will you not be more than willing to beg him to restore you to health? If you were captured by pirates, would you not gladly fall at the knees of anyone, however humble his station, if you knew that it was in his power to get you home? Suppose that you had committed some capital offence against the emperor, and that he gave one of his cooks the task of deciding whether you should be punished or restored to the prince's favour. Would you not eagerly fall at the cook's knees, press your cheek against them, and generally behave like the meanest of supplicants, thinking not of what he is, but of what he can do, and revering the emperor's majesty in his humble person?

* * * * *

30 Jon 3:9

31 Cf 1 Pet 5:5; James 4:6; Ps 51 (Vulg 50):17, one of the seven penitential psalms.

32 Cf Rom 9:21.

33 The text reads *mendicus* 'beggar,' but there is presumably a play on *medicus* 'doctor' as well as an allusion to the mendicant orders whose members often heard confessions: see 44 n97 below.

You would willingly and happily submit to the praetor's rod, since it would change your status from slave to freedman,[34] and yet you refuse the hand of a priest, who can change you from a slave of the devil to a child of God? To destroy your soul, you flung yourself gladly beneath Satan's hooves, and yet you shrink from approaching a priest to save your soul. What is this but inverted pride and perverse humility? As soon as you hoist yourself up, you are forced down again; to be raised up, you must abase yourself. Nothing is higher than God, but holding your own head high takes you further from him; to draw nearer, you must humble and abase yourself like the tax gatherer.[35] God hurls his thunderbolt upon the mountains that tower above the clouds, but he sends rain and streams of water into the valleys, which grow green with lush grass and abound in many fruits. This is of course what the Scriptures say: 'He gives his grace to the humble.'[36] Remember the accursed mountains of Gilboa, on which fall neither dew nor rain.[37] But there are also mountains in which the Lord takes delight. There was the mountain on which Abraham prepared to sacrifice his only son. The law was given on a mountain. Remember the renowned Mount Zion that trusts in the Lord, and the mountains to which the faithful lift their eyes, whence comes their help.[38] The Lord frequently prayed on the mountains. He was transfigured on a mountain. He ascended to heaven from a mountain.[39] To become a mountain that is pleasing to the Lord, you must cast out the high peaks from your heart and become a valley, that you may receive the Lord's blessing. The thistles and thorns that grow in soil subject to his curse will be rooted out, and you will abound with the many fruits of virtue.

Believe me, those whose minds rebel against submitting to a priest have not yet abased their hearts sufficiently before God or fully repented. Consider whom you offend, what terrible punishments you have earned, what indignity and shame you have brought upon yourself by sinning, how shabby and vile you make yourself in the eyes of God, the saints, and all

* * * * *

34 A reference to the Roman ceremony of manumission, in which the slave to be freed was touched with a rod, the *vindicta*

35 See Luke 18:13.

36 James 4:6; 1 Pet 5:5

37 Cf 2 Sam 1:21. For a similar development on scriptural mountains, cf *In psalmum 2* (CWE 63 121–2).

38 See Gen 22; Exod 19–20; Ps 125 (Vulg 124):1; Ps 121 (Vulg 120):1.

39 Cf Matt 17, 28:16 and Acts 1:12.

the angels. When you spurn the stole and the ring,[40] you are banished from the fellowship of God's children and become a slave to the devil, an heir to hell. How can you find shame in an act that will raise you from these depths of infamy to the heights of bliss? Are you ashamed to be thought a sinner? Then, by the same token, are you ashamed to be thought human? And even if a measure of humiliation is involved, it is less shameful to have been a slave than to refuse your freedom. In the end, at least, one humiliation will drive out another, as one nail does another.[41]

Consider whether it is better to feel humiliation just once, here and now, in the presence of one single mortal, or to blush with shame hereafter, in the sight of God, the angels, and all the saints who have lived since the world began and will have lived before its end. Think what a scene that will be! Where will you find the nerve to look God in the eye, your creator, father, redeemer, and advocate, whom you have spurned despite all his encouragement, his kindness, his magnificent promises, and his gentle forbearance? How will you raise your eyes towards the most blessed fellowship of the heavenly host, from which you have chosen to banish yourself by plunging into such wretched company? Think of all the dishonour, the disgrace, the infamy, the shame, and you will find it easy to ignore a fleeting embarrassment that will spare you eternal infamy. 'Blessed are those whose sins are put away.'[42] For confession puts away our misdeeds; God will not recall them, nor will the devil recognize them.[43]

Now, since all who are in thrall to sin have stood up against God, it is right and proper that they should be humbled in body too; and just as the body often provides sin with its opening, so too it can frequently inspire or assist the mind towards virtue. That is why the church's early rulers introduced certain external rites and ceremonies, for use not only in administering the sacraments and in divine worship, but also in banishing those who had relapsed into wrongdoing and in receiving those who had made amends through penance. They intended to deter people from sin, to invite those still unabashed by their crimes to change their ways, and to inspire in those whose penance seemed inadequate a greater antipathy to

* * * * *

40 Cf Luke 15:22; the sense is that the unrepentant sinner rejects the gifts bestowed by his father on the prodigal son.

41 *Adagia* I ii 4

42 Ps 32 (Vulg 31):1

43 This paragraph echoes a commonplace subject of sermons and manuals of confession; see Tentler *Sin* 129; *Poeniteas cito* 1155A.

sin. For the human mind in its frailty requires much encouragement before the flame of charity is kindled there and begins to burn until, as the flame grows stronger, it is transformed and filled with love.[44]

In the past wrongdoers were rebuked by the bishop and banished from the society of the Christian flock; bareheaded, barefoot, dressed in sackcloth, and sprinkled with ashes, they would stand before the church porch, humbly beseeching the passers-by and those who entered to remember them in their prayers. They were ordered to fast, to drink nothing but water, to sleep on the ground, and to do other things that were hard on the human constitution but salutary – both for those who beheld them, in order to protect their innocence and for those who suffered, in order to expiate their guilt.[45] Some vestiges of these customs survive even today, especially in the church at Rome. Certain penitents are stripped to the waist and beaten with rods outside the church, sometimes until the blood runs, watched by huge crowds; but only the penitentiary knows the charge, though everyone is aware that some appalling crime has been committed.

But in places where piety has grown cold and wickedness overflowed, the prelates have made allowance for human frailty and remitted the greatest part of the humiliation and punishment, to avoid alienating too many by exercising their prerogative against everyone. But it is our duty to compensate for the erosion of these outward ceremonies by becoming humble in mind and contrite of heart. The more the discipline of the ancient church is relaxed for us, the less indulgent we must be towards ourselves. For example, the church has conceded that, with the exception of a few kinds of sin, we may be purged of all our sins, however heinous, by confession in secret

* * * * *

44 This paragraph, part of the long passage added in 1530, is cited by Payne (193–4) as evidence of Erasmus' unexpected acceptance of confessional practice. It is in fact in line with his later more conciliatory views, also evident in *De praeparatione* (CWE 70 389–450, cited by Payne). The last sentence reflects an Augustinian and Thomistic view of sin as an impediment to charity (Rahner 150–1).

45 Erasmus describes the 'public penance' of the early church, when after confession the sinner was enrolled in the order of penitents and excluded from the prayer of the faithful and the Eucharist; Erasmus seems to be alluding to the lowest grade of penitents, the 'mourners' or 'weepers,' who were actually excluded from the church building (McNeil 8). This was apparently the only form of penitential act performed in the early church; Augustine contrasts it specifically with prayer, the remedy for lighter sins (*De symbolo ad catechumenos* 7.15 PL 40 635–6). Erasmus describes next the 'solemn penance' of the contemporary church, one of three categories of penance identified by the schoolmen (see 69 n186 below).

without incurring any shame or damage to our reputation. But we must be wary that the church's indulgence here does not teach us to be lukewarm in hating our sins; they cannot be considered trivial when any one of them can earn us eternal torment in hell. Therefore we must abandon this useless, indeed dangerous, embarrassment, just as we must banish our foolish, godless pride. How can it be that we are afraid to share our thoughts with a single man, but are unafraid of God's all-seeing eye? Pride is demented.[46]

The second advantage of confession: many people, because of their age or inexperience, do not understand the nature of their illness. They think, mistakenly, that some mortal sin is no crime at all, or else that something is a sin when it is not.[47] Or perhaps they know what is wrong, but are so deeply enmeshed that they do not know how to escape. This[48] occurs in many a case concerning matrimony, vows, restitution, and other similar things, where sometimes even the learned theologians and lawyers get confused. Here absolution is not enough; such cases require someone upright, discreet, equipped with a knowledge of Holy Writ, and with experience in both kinds of law.[49]

Another point: just as the human body may harbour latent illnesses, all the more dangerous because they are concealed, so the human spirit often harbours hidden flaws, which go unnoticed or delude us because they are disguised as piety.[50] Here the priest can help, like a skilled physician, by diagnosing from the symptoms an unrecognized disease and correcting the error. Again, he can reassure someone who is needlessly frightened by a non-existent danger. Finally, he can offer learned and reliable advice to those who are helplessly entangled with evil, showing them how to root it out, whether it be some tendency ingrained in them by nature or something that constantly resurfaces, having become habitual and familiar over the years. For the medical profession finds no illness more difficult to treat than one which has established itself over a long period of time. Sometimes

* * * * *

46 The long addition made in 1530 (24 n28 above) ends here.

47 Only mortal sins had to be formally confessed, but it was acknowledged by the manuals (eg Rosemondt ff 144–58) that distinguishing them from venial sins was not a simple matter; see Tentler *Sin* 144–8.

48 This occurs ... as piety] Added in 1530.

49 That is, canon law and civil law. Erasmus discusses many of the intricate legal problems concerning marriage and vows in his *Institutio christiani matrimonii* of 1526; see 48 n111 below.

50 This second point seems to echo Luther's argument against the requirement (eg Rosemondt f 3) that confession be complete (*A Discussion on How Confession Should Be Made* LW 39 23–47 and *The Keys* LW 321–77).

such cases are quite hopeless, and the best that can be offered is not a cure but some relief of the symptoms; examples are chronic epilepsy, gout, or gallstones. But where disease of the spirit is concerned, we must never despair of salvation. Remember that Christ not only cleansed the lepers and the woman troubled for years by the issue of blood, but he also raised the paralytic who had lain for years by the pool, and finally revived Lazarus, dead for four days.[51] The learned and trusty physician can predict the onset of illness from physical symptoms and can forestall it with no great difficulty, though once established it is hard to dislodge without intensive treatment. The wise and trusty physician to the soul does the same: recognizing the danger signs of approaching trouble, he gives advice and shows how it can be avoided. And such advice is never more timely than during sacramental confession.

It will make no difference whether we consider what I am about to name as the third advantage of confession, or simply add it to the previous section: in confession the priest can cure two very great ills. One of them is a dangerous complacency or (more dangerous still) vanity about one's sins. The other is far more perilous than either – despair of God's forgiveness. The[52] first to experience this was Cain, the model for Judas Iscariot.

A mysterious cachet, you see, attaches to certain sins, such as debauching pretty girls, laying siege to rich and noble matrons, losing huge sums at dice, doing the dirty on one's enemies, or throwing an outrageously lavish feast. The way some people confess suggests that, far from being ashamed of these misdeeds, they would like to trumpet them as glorious achievements. Realizing this, the priest must endeavour to banish such foolish vanity from his penitent's mind. He must expose the wickedness of the sin and replace that dangerous vanity with salutary shame and grief.

By contrast, some sins are of such a kind that they revolt our natural feelings and even their perpetrators curse and hate themselves: for example, parricide, infanticide, monstrous and unspeakable sexual practices, common thefts that require no skill, sorcery, pacts with unclean spirits, blasphemy against God, and other similar crimes. The enormity of these crimes often brings people to the brink of despair, the most terrible of all afflictions. Someone who takes God's goodness for granted clearly offends him less than someone who, despairing of his forgiveness, denies that God is good and merciful, even though he is mercy itself; such people deny that

* * * * *

51 Matt 8:2–4; Matt 9:20–2 and Mark 5:25–34; John 5:2–9, conflated with Matt 9:2–7; John 11:1–44

52 The first . . . Iscariot] Added in 1530.

God speaks truth, even though he promised forgiveness to every sinner, without exception, who undergoes a change of heart,[53] and will surely keep his promise, if he is true; they deny God's omnipotence, as if there were some human affliction he could not cure. In such a case the priest will therefore try by every means to arouse in the despairing and downcast penitent the hope of forgiveness and to fortify that hope against a relapse.

[The fourth advantage.] But there are some whose spirit is so irresolute and weak that they dare not promise themselves forgiveness, even of the tiniest misdeed, and whose consciences are not at ease until the priest has been through the prescribed ritual by which absolution is granted. Now Christian kindness requires, I think, that human frailties of this sort should be humoured until the people concerned have developed greater strength of character; it will be necessary to encourage them to do so time and time again.

I[54] have known people who could not be convinced that they had been absolved unless the priest confirmed it in writing. These days a great many people scrupulously confess even the most insignificant of venial sins, some of them quite trifling,[55] such as nocturnal emissions, which are caused entirely involuntarily by a mere physical reflex, with no consent involved. Jean Gerson wrote so anxiously on this subject that he sowed unease in many a conscience.[56] Similar are those who, when saying their prayers, are never easy in their minds and fret about the most insignificant details; very often a weakness of this sort contains an element of perversity. Their only anxiety

* * * * *

53 In 1530 the single adjective *resipiscenti* 'undergoing a change of heart' replaces a phrase meaning 'whenever one bewails his sin.' The adjective recalls Erasmus' suggested translation of μετανοεῖτε in Matt 3:2 (LB VI 17F), translated by Jerome *poenitentiam agite* 'do penance.' Erasmus considers that *resipiscite* conveys better the Greek sense of a change of mind, and avoids the ambiguity of *poenitentia*, which means both 'repentance' and 'penance'; cf Rummel I 140–1.

54 I have known people . . . resist them] These following three paragraphs were added in 1530.

55 On the dangers of scrupulosity, well recognized by the medieval confessors, see Tentler *Sin* 156–62. Some Reformers concluded that it could lead to despair (Myers 'Humanism' 365), and the Council of Trent agreed that venial sins need not be confessed (Denzinger 1680).

56 Gerson *De pollutione nocturna et praeparatione ad missam* ('On Nocturnal Pollution and Preparation for the Mass') in *Oeuvres complètes* ed P. Glorieux (Paris 1973) IX 35–49, a work very frequently reprinted in the sixteenth century. Gerson was one of the most widely read and authoritative late medieval writers on confession; see Tentler *Sin* 45–6 and passim. It was usually considered that a mortal sin, which had to be confessed, must involve a measure of consent (eg Rosemondt ff 159–67).

is whether they have correctly enunciated every last letter and syllable; it is a matter of complete indifference to them whether they understand what they are reading, or whether they respect and are influenced by the holy words they say.

Similarly people confess sudden, fleeting thoughts, which do not lodge in their minds but merely skim across them, as if they had definitely decided to do what came into their mind, or even as if they had actually done it, though often these are things too abhorrent to put into words, like sudden doubts about the truth of Scripture or the articles of faith, or thoughts of incest and other unnatural lusts. To confess things like this, scrupulously, one after the other, is merely to burden the confessor with superfluities and afflict the penitent with groundless fears. It is the sign of good character, so they say, to fear guilt where there is no guilt.[57] Good, perhaps, but by no means perfect. Such a tendency in a boy or girl suggests a temperament suitable for religious instruction, but in adults it is inappropriate and useless, dangerous even, if these unnecessary efforts to avoid sin lead to some more serious sin, something that, thanks to Satan's wiles, we see happening to a good many people. Such perverse behaviour must be challenged, and foolish weakness corrected. A Christian conscience will be pained by such examples of human weakness and will do all in its power to counteract them and to strive for improvement.

The truly pious wish to keep their bodies quite unblemished, as they hope they will be at the resurrection, and thus are upset when their earthly vessel is polluted by lewd dreams; but not everything that troubles us is necessarily a sin. The pious are upset when the body, with its hunger, thirst, somnolence, or weariness, breaks their concentration on prayer, when the members rebel against the heart and the flesh desires against the spirit.[58] But so far from these weaknesses being sins, they provide the opportunity to be strong, if one does one's utmost to resist them.[59]

I think that the same methods should be adopted for people with a similar weakness, who try to confess the same sins over and over again, torturing themselves and wasting the priest's time.[60] Christian charity suggests

* * * * *

57 An allusion to a celebrated aphorism of Gregory the Great often cited in the debate over scrupulosity (Tentler *Sin* 156–7)

58 Cf Rom 7:23 and Gal 5:17.

59 The addition made in 1530 ends here; the following sentence thus refers back to those who seek formal absolution for the 'tiniest misdeed.'

60 'Taxander' read this as a suggestion that the same sin should never be repeated in confession and attacked it as 'wrong and scandalous'; *Manifesta mendacia*

that they be humoured sometimes, but in such a way that they are guided towards better things by admonition, and learn to love more and fear less.

The fifth advantage: there can be no remission of sins unless through the love of God penitents conceive an appropriate detestation of the sins they have committed, together with a firm and serious resolve to refrain in future from everything that offends God. All this will be considerably easier to achieve if one thinks carefully about one's confession beforehand. People about to testify before a judge will give the matter a lot of thought, weighing up all the attendant circumstances more carefully than if they were not obliged to testify.[61] In the same way, people who are thinking out what to say to the priest must give deeper thought to the magnitude and the gravity of their crimes. They will recall how often they have relapsed into sin, how long they have dwelt in this darkness and squalor, and in the meantime how many blessings they have denied themselves, estranged from God, separated from communion with the whole body of Christ, and exposed to eternal punishment in hell. Close scrutiny of all this will produce a dread of sin.

Sometimes this dread is caused by fear of punishment, which will engender despair unless, through contemplation of God's mercy and through trust in the Lord Jesus, who has once and for all paid the price for all our sins, it develops into a hope of forgiveness,[62] when servile fear is replaced by a love worthy of a son who is sorry for the offences he has committed, not because they drag him down to hell, but because they offend the best of fathers, who deserves our gratitude. For if any son who loves his parents with all his heart will not knowingly do anything to upset them, even without any fear of punishment, how much more will someone who loves God, who must be loved above all else, not only detest the past misdeeds that offended God, but also try to ensure that nothing similar occurs in the future? So this advantage would encourage people to confess to a priest, even if confession were not necessary; how much more should they embrace it if necessity forces them to take advantage of it!

* * * * *

CWE 71 121 no 20. The suggestion that such people be humoured up to a point was common in the medieval manuals (Clavasio f 48 and Tentler *Sin* 77–8; see also Payne 204 and n85).

61 Unusually, Erasmus resorts to a judicial analogy. On the competing images, see Anne T. Thayer 'Judge and Doctor: Images of the Confessor in Printed Model Sermon Collections, 1450–1520' in *Penitence in the Age of Reformations* ed K. Jackson Lualdi and A.T. Thayer (Aldershot and Burlington, Vt 2000) 10–29.

62 Erasmus is describing the transformation of 'attrition' into 'contrition'; see 35 n68 below.

The sixth advantage: the deep regret we feel in contemplating our sins helps to obtain God's mercy and forgiveness for our past misdeeds and strengthens our resolve to refrain from sin in future. Similarly the humiliation of baring our conscience to another removes much of the punishment and prevents us from backsliding too easily, just as children learn from beatings and humiliation not to repeat some piece of bad behaviour.[63] Now the great majority of us are weak and foolish and inclined to sin. But this kind of humiliation is so hurtful to more noble minds that many would prefer death to dishonour, were it not that they love God or fear hell.

The seventh advantage: as the old proverb has it, the greatest part of wisdom is to know oneself.[64] Nothing contributes more to self-knowledge than confession, which immediately sets before our eyes our entire existence; it shakes out every thicket of the mind, forcing us to consider where God's commandments should lead, and to ponder our own inclinations and the things that may tempt us to slide back. For true meditation upon the law of the Lord[65] means seeking to achieve the kind of life that we would wish to be leading if the last day of life were at hand.

The eighth advantage is that anyone who confesses to a priest is assisted not only by his counsel, comfort, and encouragement but also by his prayers. For he prays that the penitent should receive the grace of the Holy Spirit, along with the strength and courage to resist Satan. Given that any devout Christian's prayer has a role in obtaining God's grace, how much more effective will a priest's prayer be? This is of course James' theme when he says that here too the assiduous prayers of the righteous are the most powerful of all.[66] I shall say nothing at the moment concerning the power of the keys, on which the theologians have written so extensively that there is no need to pursue it here.[67] What is meant by 'attrition,' whether confession

* * * * *

63 Erasmus does not explain what he means by the 'punishment' that is removed by 'the humiliation of baring our conscience to another'; one might understand this as psychological self-punishment ('deep regret'), the punishment of penance, or perhaps eternal punishment. For 'The Shame of the Confessional,' see Tentler *Sin* 128–30.

64 *Adagia* I vi 95

65 Cf Ps 1:2.

66 James 5:16; 'here too' means in the confession of sins to one another, to which James' dictum refers.

67 The two keys entrusted to Peter in Matt 16:19 are vital to the theory of confession. The key of knowledge enables the priest to judge the penitent's sin, and the key of power enables him to pronounce absolution and determine satisfaction. See Tentler *Sin* 96–7; Myers *Sinning* 18; and especially P. Anciaux

changes 'attrition' into 'contrition,' whether confession ensures the instant remission of sins from the first moment – I shall leave the Scotists to argue about all that.[68]

The[69] ninth advantage: through baptism we are saved from Satan's tyranny and are made children of God, grafted to Christ's body, the church; we are admitted to the blessed fellowship of the angels and of all who are destined to inherit heaven, wherever on earth they live, have lived, or shall live. Through penance, similarly, we are formally restored to that company. Now those who have been inspired by God to hate their sins are already freed from guilt, given that confession to a mere mortal is not

* * * * *

La théologie du sacrement de pénitence au xiie siècle (Louvain 1949) 539–73. Elsewhere Erasmus minimizes the power of the keys (see Payne 210–11) and, for example, has Pope Julius make mock of them in *Julius exclusus* (CWE 27 168 and n2). Luther denied them to the priesthood altogether: 'The keys are yours and mine' (*Eyn Sermon* LW 35 16); he developed his thought in *The Keys* of 1530 (LW 40 325–77).

68 'Contrition' is usually defined as perfect sorrow for sin arising from love of God, whereas 'attrition' is a hatred of sins arising from a lesser motive, such as the wickedness of sin or the fear of punishment, human or divine (see, for example, the Council of Trent's definition in Denzinger 1678). On the whole question, up to and including the Council of Trent, see Spykman. Tentler (*Sin* 250–63) analyses the more subtle distinctions made by the schoolmen (eg Clavasio f 48 verso) on the basis of differences in formation by grace, degree of perfection, and intensity of sorrow. Erasmus obviously considered attrition to be dangerously conducive to despair, and at best merely a first stage towards contrition (see, for example, 33 above). On the controversies among the schoolmen (including Duns Scotus himself) over the conversion from attrition to contrition, see Payne 328 n95; Rahner 153–62; Tentler *Sin* 263–73; Myers *Sinning* 16–25. Discussion among the theologians as to whether sin was actually remitted through contrition, before the priest pronounced absolution, was based on Luke 5:14; Erasmus alludes to this in his reply to Béda (*Apologiae aliquot in Natalem Beddam* LB IX 611C). On the background, see Payne 318–19 n7; Tentler *Sin* 281–94.

69 The ninth advantage . . . gospel freedom] Added by Erasmus in 1530. In these three paragraphs Erasmus counteracts the allegation of 'Taxander' that he had undermined confession by enumerating nine disadvantages but only eight advantages (*Manifesta mendacia* 122 no 25) and formally distances himself from the Reformers, answering accusations that the original *Exomologesis* supported Luther (*Manifesta mendacia* 117 no 3). Tentler ('Forgiveness' 116) points out that this 'advantage' makes clear what is most important for Erasmus, namely that confession restores the penitent to the society of the body of Christ. Payne (204–5) sees here Erasmus' 'traditionalism and concern for church unity' (which are indeed more apparent in some of these 1530 additions).

strictly necessary; though the opposite used to be taught and is still taught by some today,[70] I take the liberty of disagreeing. However, contempt for a widespread and long-standing custom, and stubborn resistance to the traditions of the church, do offend God and undermine the peace of the Christian commonwealth. At least someone who confesses to a priest cannot be accused of that. Moreover, even if one were free of sin beforehand, a confession properly made will bring much enlightenment and grace, benefits that no true Christian will spurn.

Again, some people have, or think they have, a clear conscience as long as they are in good health; but when their end is near, they see things very differently, either because danger is now close at hand or because it is now that the Tempter deploys all his wiles against them. The surest remedy against such disquiet is to confess to a priest in one's own time and in good faith. Finally, the church is more willing to accept someone who makes confession than someone who does not, just as the Jews were more willing to accept the circumcised than the uncircumcised. For it is part and parcel of true piety to fulfil all righteousness, to avoid the stumbling block, and, as St Paul says, to please all in all things.[71]

I have said all this not on my own account, but for the sake of those who are still not convinced that this form of confession, being a human institution, is strictly necessary for salvation. They who are spiritual judge all things and are judged by no one,[72] but since the common run of humanity is predisposed to shake off the Lord's yoke, I consider contempt for confession to be a slippery slope leading to paganism, down which we see a great many sliding at the moment, under the false banner of gospel freedom.[73]

* * * * *

70 The necessity of confession once a year was imposed by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and reaffirmed by the Council of Trent (Denzinger 812 and 1683; see Tentler *Sin* 20–2 and 57–70; and Tanner I 245 and II 712). Luther calls this 'a diabolical and murderous doctrine' (*A Discussion on How Confession Should Be Made* LW 39 35), but some schoolmen had already argued that if one has no mortal sins to confess this is only a hypothetical necessity; cf Aquinas *Summa theologiae* III q 84 a 5 and *Supplementum* q 6 a 3. Erasmus makes much of the authoritative canonist Gratian's hesitations over the necessity of confession in his *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* (CWE 72 374–5).

71 Allusions to Matt 3:15; 1 Cor 8:9 and 10:33

72 1 Cor 2:15. Rosemondt (f 2 recto) asserts in his first sentence that the sacrament of penance is necessary for salvation, and the decrees of the Council of Trent insist on it, in opposition to Luther and Calvin (Denzinger 1672, 1683 and 1706).

73 Passage added in 1530.

Thus far I have been listing the principal advantages of confessing, which[74] I know are in any case innumerable. Now the time has come to deal briefly with the evils that seem to arise from the practice of confession, although the blame lies with us rather than the institution itself.[75]

First, the practice of communicating one's sins to other people seems likely to poison natural simplicity and innocence, such as we see in boys and girls as yet untouched by life's corruption. Such innocence depends largely upon being ignorant of sin and indeed having no idea that people exist who commit such and such a crime. Even learned priests, who have acquired a wealth of knowledge from books, frequently admit that they would never have suspected that such wicked deeds were committed in the world as those they hear from penitents.

The most infectious are those connected with sex or the forbidden arts. There are some sexual practices that no wise parents would allow to be mentioned before their sons and daughters, because nature, given the chance, is inclined to experiment with evil. It is safer that such things be unknown, as far as possible. Then there are the black arts, which seduce the inquisitive into experimentation; the vice of curiosity is naturally implanted in almost all of us, titillating our minds with the desire to find out.

Now priests are only human, often young, and sometimes wicked or at least weak. Minds like these are corrupted by hearing the monstrous misdeeds of others, and they are often prodded into committing the very crimes that they have heard about from others. And the infection spreads more widely each time that a priest, as often happens, reveals to others what he has heard from his penitents, though without mentioning their names, of course. Sometimes[76] in fact they do name names, but even if the names are kept very quiet, the deeds themselves will usually be enough to poison the listener's mind.

However, it is an even worse mistake to mention the unmentionable in public, in sermons. That is why the wisest secular magistrates, wanting

* * * * *

74 which ... innumerable] This clause was added in 1530 as a further riposte to the numerical nit-picking of 'Taxander.'

75 Erasmus had already briefly enumerated these 'evils' in his reply to Lee in 1520 (*Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72 369–71) and in the colloquy *Confabulatio pia* of 1522 (CWE 39 97). His critics considered that the mere fact of listing them would do the institution great disservice: see *Manifesta mendacia* 119 no 11 and 122 no 23; *Apologia adversus monachos* LB IX 1063A. The *Index expurgatorius* (LB X 1820A) recommends for deletion the entire critique of confessional practice from this point to 'life in heaven' 53 below.

76 Sometimes ... quiet] Added in 1530.

to keep their town healthy, will pronounce sentence of death on a felon, but without always specifying all his crimes, it being inadvisable for everyone to know that there are people who commit such crimes. Long ago in Deventer, when I was still a boy, I heard some women of doubtful virtue – there was a great army of them there in those days – applauding and congratulating one another on the fact that they could indulge themselves with their lovers because the parish priest in his sermon had said that certain shepherds had confessed that they had behaved unchastely towards their flock. It was during the Jubilee.[77] Could anyone be more foolish than that priest who, under no compulsion and for no possible useful purpose, blurted this out to the people and thus encouraged fornicators and adulterers in their vices? Recently, too, a certain Franciscan said, in a public sermon in a famous town, that if the old law that adulterers should be stoned were still in existence, a whole mountain of stones would not be enough for all the stonings.

The second evil is similar. Many people no doubt become complacent about their sins when they compare them with worse. For example, a man utterly defiled by fornication and adultery will consider himself an innocent if he hears via confession about foul couplings with incubi or animals, or else if he discovers that people whom he took to be learned, grave, and saintly are in fact staggering beneath terrible crimes. It is human nature to want to exaggerate someone else's faults and understate one's own. I heard a certain theologian, himself no stranger to ladies of easy virtue, say that he had heard that a certain spiritual director to a convent had confessed to debauching two hundred nuns.[78] The man telling the tale was so pleased with himself that apparently it would never have crossed his mind to consider practising chastity.

The third disadvantage[79] is that this form of confession makes a good many priests very haughty, though God appointed them to be fathers and

* * * * *

77 This passage is frequently cited in discussions of Erasmus' early life. Although the Jubilee was proclaimed in Rome at Christmas 1475, it was not celebrated in Deventer until mid-March 1478; see Allen I 579 (Appendix II Erasmus' Early Life) and H. Vredeveld 'Ages of Erasmus and the Year of His Birth' *Renaissance Quarterly* 46 (1993) 790–1.

78 This anecdote was condemned by 'Taxander,' but Erasmus replied that the subject required it 'lest the priest cast those confessing carnal sins into despair'; *Manifesta mendacia* 119 no 12.

79 The Spanish monks complained about Erasmus' use of the word *incommodum* 'disadvantage.' In his reply (*Apologia adversus monachos* LB IX 1063A) Erasmus states that he calls them 'evils' (*mala*) and not 'disadvantages' (*incommoda*),

not masters of the people. But anyone who knows another's secrets becomes the master. Anyone who has entrusted secrets to another is bound to be fearful, and the person who knows such things about another usually becomes contemptuous. Thus confession seems to take away Christian freedom, even though Christ wished there to be no masters among us,[80] and to put out the flame of charity, since if you fear someone, you also hate them,[81] and if you know all about another's guilty secrets, you can scarcely be expected to love them. At best, the priest will think less of his penitents, having a weapon with which he could frighten and ruin them. Even if the priest is too honest to abuse his conscience, things often come out by accident that will throw suspicion upon him. This explains why there can be no genuine friendship between penitent and confessor.

The fourth is that it is not uncommon for penitents to fall among wicked priests who, under the cloak of confession, will perpetrate unmentionable deeds, and instead of their healers become their allies, or masters, or pupils in wickedness. I wish that this warning were superfluous and that there were not plentiful examples to be found everywhere, which I cannot recall without pain and could not set down without feeling ashamed.

The fifth is that this form of confession endangers a lot of reputations and even lives because priests too often fail to keep silent. Which of our organs is more slippery than the tongue? Is there anyone who will not on occasion blurt out some secret in the bosom of a friend, to whom they will rashly confide everything that has been confided to them? Not to mention the many whose character is such that they will burst if they do not blurt out secrets entrusted to them; I wish that this defect were confined to the female sex. No doubt all too many examples will occur to everyone, so I am happy to refrain from giving any. But even allowing that a priest may know how to control his tongue, all too often hatred and jealousy spring up to break the bonds of silence; sometimes drunkenness, too, makes a secret concealed in the heart float up onto the tongue. Finally a fit of illness or frenzy can break the silence of the confessional. I saw this happen to a

* * * * *

though this is strictly true only of the first two. When he reviewed the remedies in the 1530 edition of the *Exomologesis*, Erasmus used *incommoda* throughout (70–4 below).

80 Cf Matt 23:10. In Ep 2037:291–2 Erasmus castigates monks who expect a 'rich harvest' from the wealthy families whose secrets they have learned via the confessional.

81 Cf *Adagia* II ix 62, a famous definition of the tyrant.

parish priest when I was young; becoming overheated during a sermon, he named a number of women and exposed their crimes. Again, there are several examples of people whose thoughts, confided to a priest, have later cost them their lives.[82]

Now there are certain exceptional cases in which it is lawful to betray a penitent.[83] But some priests pretend that anything that makes them blurt out a secret must be one of these cases. Others believe that there is nothing wrong in defaming a household or a community so long as they suppress the names of individuals. But will anyone be pleased to hear even his town or his country being brought into disrepute? I have heard so many of them recount, at some party or other, the things they learned from the confessions of people now dead, believing that they are allowed to do it, though no living person would want their memory to be besmirched for posterity. Finally, princes sometimes demand on oath that priests should betray the perpetrator of a crime. I should approve most heartily if a priest could serve his country without betraying an individual, but I would not consider him perjured if he swore that he knew nothing about it, if he were being asked questions that he should not be compelled to answer. It seems inhuman to expose anyone to such a peril, especially as there are so many examples of priests being endangered in this way. The burden seems as heavy on the confessor as on the penitent.

I will pass over how disagreeable it is for a good and learned priest to waste so much time listening to the sordid details of people's lives, while risking his honour, as I have said, and to be subjected to fetid breath stinking of garlic or infected with disease, especially when so many are suffering from leprosy, without being segregated, or from the French pox, which is a form of leprosy. There is no surer way to become infected than to breathe

* * * * *

82 *per jugulum rediere*, literally 'have returned through the throat'; Erasmus plays on the figurative sense of *jugulum* 'murder.' A more light-hearted version of these charges is found in the *Moria* (CWE 27 132).

83 Breaking the seal of confession could be punished with lifelong pilgrimage, according to Gratian (*Decretum* 2 dist VI II) or lifelong incarceration in a monastery, according to canon 21 (*Omnis utriusque sexus*) of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215; see Tanner I 245 and 245 n4 for further bibliography on auricular confession. The schoolmen debated exceptions, including the possibility of preventing by disclosure grave evils to church or state, but post-Tridentine rulings reaffirmed the inviolability of the seal; see J.L. McCarthy in NCE 4 133–4 and, on the whole question, B. Kurtscheid *A History of the Seal of Confession* trans F.A. Marks (St Louis and London 1927).

an invalid's breath, so that no little danger is thus added to his general inconvenience.[84] How hard it is for a parish priest, in the flower of his age, and well equipped intellectually and morally to serve the community, to be constrained to enter, at dead of night, some bedroom where a plague victim has just emptied his bowels or vomited, or where the one suffering is sweating, washed, smeared with ointment, and on fire with the so-called French pox; and he must risk sitting there until the patient has finished confessing. Nor is one visit enough: he is called back time after time, whenever the victim, dying and by now delirious, shouts out that he has forgotten some detail or other.

The theologians use such facts to argue that this form of confession was not introduced by mere mortals, but by Christ himself. For since Peter, the first of the apostles, thought it unfair to yoke the Gentiles to the law of Moses (which the Jews themselves found hard to bear, like their fathers before them),[85] it would seem very cruel for mere mortals to impose on their fellows the burden of confession, which is more irksome, by itself, than the whole of Moses' law[86] (whose[87] rituals St Peter did not think should be imposed on the Gentiles; he even lifted them from the Jews), since brotherly love seems rather to encourage us, as far as possible, to lighten one another's burdens.[88] Christ did not demand celibacy from anyone; would a mere mortal demand something so difficult from another? Paul allows for human frailty and remits some part of the Lord's command;[89] how much impudence, they ask, would it take for people, who cannot be compared to Paul, to impose such a burden over and above the Lord's command? Especially[90]

* * * * *

84 Richard DeMolen regards this passage as evidence that Erasmus himself heard confessions (*The Spirituality of Erasmus of Rotterdam* [Nieuwkoop 1987] 58), though there is no documentary evidence of this.

85 Acts 15:10

86 This argument was used by Duns Scotus and a number of his followers, in terms very similar to Erasmus' here (Tentler *Sin* 69). But they did not make the comparison with the law of Moses, and indeed 'Taxander' found it objectionable. Erasmus replied that the relative gravity of the two laws was a subject worthy of a debate (*Manifesta mendacia* 119 no 14), to which he had already contributed in the *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72 369–70.

87 whose rituals ... Jews] Added in 1530.

88 Cf Gal 6:2.

89 Payne (200) suggests that this refers to 1 Cor 7:15, where Paul relaxes somewhat Christ's commandment concerning divorce.

90 Especially since ... conscience] Added in 1530; Erasmus reiterates his distaste for the present ritual, with its preoccupation with form rather than results.

since auricular confession is at present so hedged around with doubts and obstacles invented by men that scarcely anyone leaves the priest with a tranquil conscience.

The sixth disadvantage is that this disclosure of secret transgressions, and even of secret thoughts, seems to encourage immodesty. When people have, several times over, 'wiped off their blushes'[91] sufficiently to risk confessing such things to the priest, it makes them progressively bolder, inciting them to act as they please. Modesty is the only sure guardian of innocence. And with some kinds of vice it is almost more dangerous to recall them than to indulge them in the first place.

The seventh: this recollection of secret crimes reduces many of the weaker sort to despair, and some even to madness, whereas the main aim should be to make sinners place their trust in Christ's promises and to love rather than fear him. For it is a waste of time to confess if you do not thereby conceive a feeling of love for God. But an excessively scrupulous recital of the kinds and species of your sins, and of the aggravating circumstances leading to other kinds of sin, distracts the mind from love for God and spawns hatred and despair, especially since some priests surround the business of confession with so many complications that it is hard to find anyone who leaves them with a completely easy conscience.[92] This evil particularly besets children, women, the aged, and people who are timid by nature; I know quite a few of those! And the danger increases if such people happen upon an intimidating and cantankerous priest.

The eighth: there are others who are just plain arrogant, giving little or no thought to changing their lives and having no serious regrets about their past; they consider it sufficient simply to tell the priest what they have done and for him to pronounce absolution. Nothing is more pernicious than this kind of overconfidence. But there is no shortage of priests who will pander to such people, or at least connive with them, because[93] they value

* * * * *

91 *Adagia* I viii 47

92 'Taxander' compares this to Luther's assertion that contrition based on discussion and consideration of sins is hypocritical, a position condemned by the Council of Trent (Denzinger 1705). Erasmus replies that he has often argued that contrition of the heart is enhanced by such things (*Manifesta mendacia* 121 no 21). The passage was also attacked by the Spanish monks: *Apologia adversus monachos* LB IX 1063D. To mollify his critics Erasmus added *nimis* 'excessively' in 1530. Medieval confessors were well aware of the dangers of scrupulosity; see Tentler *Sin* 76–8.

93 because they value ... of this kind] This satirical passage was added in 1530.

the income that the recital brings more highly than the salvation of souls, which engenders the love of God that drives out false beliefs.[94] Hence the joke you hear many people make as they return from the priest: 'I've got rid of that load; I dumped it all in a monk's cowl.' These people must be steered away from overconfidence of this kind.

The ninth is that the performance of confession seems to offer many the chance to play the hypocrite. Applying one's mind to making a true and proper confession is no easy matter, yet through fear of disgrace or excommunication many people make bogus confessions and thus make a mockery of the sacrament of penance. They would do less harm if they abstained from both the Eucharist and confession until, having grown to hate their past life, they were prepared of their own accord to seek the solace of confession. As it is, they add hypocrisy to sacrilege. These are just some of the things that people get up to. After weighing the whole question very carefully, one may ask whether these human failings do not result in confession doing more harm than good to piety.

It remains for me to suggest how best we may deal with an institution which, as some[95] teach, cannot be changed, in order to derive the greatest possible benefit and the least possible disadvantage from it. It would help if both parties, confessor as well as penitent, were to do their job properly. A priest must not take on the arduous task of hearing confessions unless he possesses the appropriate learning, moral probity, wisdom, and – above all – piety. Whatever his personal inclinations at other times, when he prepares to hear confession he must take on the role of priest and have nothing on his mind but God, whom he represents, to some extent, in this act. Even those whose lives are far from unblemished try to make themselves fit to participate before they receive the Eucharist.[96] Similarly a confessor should prepare his mind for so important and so sacred a task, lest he play the bad doctor, worsening his neighbour's illness and calling the wrath of God upon himself, with the result that each of them leaves the other worse off

* * * * *

94 A glancing allusion to the 'alms' that the confessor expected (Tentler *Sin* 71 and 87–8). Erasmus had been much more severe on the cupidity of confessors in the *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72 369, even suggesting that the confessor should pay penitents a fee to encourage them to come to him. See also Allen Ep 2205:106–23 on confessors who pursue money, power, and sex.

95 Erasmus added *quidam* 'some' in 1530; previously this appeared to be the universal opinion.

96 *synaxis* (corrected from *syntaxis* in the first edition); probably a gibe at monks, since this rare Grecism was used to mean both the mass and an assembly of monks meeting for prayer; cf CWE 78 167 n28.

than before. These days it is most often the priests who are dirty, ignorant, frivolous, worthless – some of them not right in the head and many the worse for drink – who appropriate this task, and all for the sake of a few pence.

A good deal of the blame lies with the bishops, who have a duty to ensure that unworthy candidates are not accepted indiscriminately into the priesthood. It would be better to have a small number of capable priests than a whole flock who are useless, if not downright dangerous. The bishops should exercise greater foresight to prevent the care of the Christian flock from being entrusted to anyone unsuited to the task. The same should be urged upon the superiors of the Franciscan and Dominican orders, whose members are particularly eager to take on this task and will appropriate it whenever the extraordinary sloth of the parish clergy gives them an opportunity.[97] For this is a task that must not be delegated to just anyone.

These[98] days we see that no one is keener to hear confessions than priests who are young, ignorant, or immoral. The wise and honest ones, when faced with this task, make it plain that they will do it only if they are pressed into it by charity, if their superiors insist, or if the case is urgent.[99] Take a good look at the sort of people who will confound heaven and earth[100] should anyone warn against the over-eager practice of confession; you will see men who are ravenous, covetous, devoted to their bellies, and often frankly immoral. They would make less fuss were it not that confession fuels their extravagance, greed, and lust. The state will not allow just anyone to be a doctor and heal the body; is it enough, for the healing of souls, to sport a cowl or a shaven crown? In the courts, decisions about the

* * * * *

97 Under special privileges, the mendicant Franciscans and Dominicans had the power to hear the confessions of laymen not officially under their pastoral call. Many of them wrote manuals of confession, in view of this special interest; see Tentler *Sin* 64, 313–18 and Myers *Sinning* 31. The long-standing conflict between parish clergy and these orders is satirized in Erasmus' colloquy *Funus* CWE 40 763–95.

98 These days we see ... unfit for it] This satirical paragraph was added in 1530. The qualities of the ideal confessor are listed in the manuals; see for example *Poeniteas cito* 1155A and Rosemondt f 2 verso.

99 In his *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* (CWE 72 372–3) Erasmus attributed this reluctance to the anguish that confession causes to both parties. This rather Lutheran idea (cf *The Sacrament of Penance* LW 35 15–16) has been toned down in this 1530 addition to the *Exomologesis*.

100 That is, cause a great commotion; *Adagia* I iii 71.

most trivial matters are entrusted only to the most sober of citizens; should this holy work be done by a bleary-eyed drunkard straight after an orgy? It should therefore be the role of prelates, or even of state officials, to assign to this domain only those best suited to it by their age, lifestyle, learning, faith, wisdom, and humanity, and, conversely, to remove or, if they deserve it, to punish severely those who are unfit for it.

Again, anyone preparing to make confession must themselves be careful to choose a suitable priest and must be in no hurry to change when once they have found a good one. When physically ill we will look out for a capable doctor, but when the sickness is spiritual, we will send for anyone at all,[101] which is especially dangerous since it has not been unknown for inquisitive laymen to play the role of the priest. Now those who, through immaturity or inexperience, have not yet acquired the necessary discrimination will have to ask more experienced relatives or teachers to suggest a suitable person to whom to confess. At the moment one may observe many who, left to themselves, choose the worst possible confessor in order to be rid of an unpleasant chore with the least possible fuss. Such a confession is a confession in name only.

Nor is confession much more beneficial to those who go to the priest light-heartedly and more or less out of habit. When preparing to confess one must be mindful that it is an important undertaking, the most solemn of all, and one must endeavour to confess as though one might never confess again. For penance is like a second baptism. No one undergoes baptism without a determination to do nothing that would require a second baptism. Similarly, while the acknowledged frailty of human nature means that people who relapse and must constantly return to the remedy of penance are not turned away, those who undergo penance must hope and pray to face death ten times over rather than repeat the sins that they lament. At one time those who had reoffended after performing penance were barred by most churches from repeating public penance, so eager was the church that there should be, if at all possible, no returning to sin.[102] But in this, as in so much else, people's priorities are upside down. They torment themselves in their anxiety to list all their sins in good faith, to leave out no species of sin, to pass over no circumstance; and they were right to leave nothing out.

* * * * *

101 Doubtless a commonplace; exactly the same point is made in the manual of Jacobus de Clusa, printed in 1520 (Tentler *Sin* 126). On the choice of a confessor, see 72 and n194 below.

102 On public penance, see n45 above; it could not normally be repeated (52 n127 below).

But while they are absorbed in this, they miss the main point of the whole operation.[103]

In the first place, therefore, confessions must be made to God. Now it is no easy matter to confess to him, because he will hear nothing but the words of the heart; but once this is accomplished, it will be easy to confess to a man. Thus the first part of the process must be given as much attention as if it alone sufficed. Its main objective is that the penitent should conceive a deep hatred of sin – not merely of particular sins, but of everything that offends God, and not merely through fear of retribution, divine or human, but through the unfettered love that transports us toward God. For those who detest their sins only up to a point, but would repeat them if no punishment were involved, will not escape damnation. And anyone who, for instance, detests drunkenness but indulges in illicit lovemaking does not hate sin through love for God; otherwise everything offensive to God would be equally hateful. A vow to improve one's life will be neither firm nor effective unless it is inspired by love for God.

Moreover, it is beyond the power of sinners to grant themselves this feeling of love. It is a gratuitous gift of God, though it must be sought from him with tears, prayer, almsgiving, and other spiritual exercises. It is sometimes helpful to beg our fellow Christians to intercede for us with God. But if a request is not immediately answered, a good beginning must not be abandoned. Often God delays his gifts in order to give more abundantly. He is generous and will bestow his gifts freely, but not upon the lazy. Thus if people reflect on a life ill lived and on the terrors of hell and thereby conceive a measure of detestation for their crimes, they should not instantly run to the priest but continue their weeping. They must use prayer to seek, beg, and implore, until they are touched by another kind of fear, accompanied by a determined vow to change their lives and by a love that is full of hope. When they have been touched by this spirit, which Paul calls spirit of the children,[104] let them remember not to attribute it to themselves, but to acknowledge it as God's gratuitous gift. Falling at his feet, let them give thanks for his loving kindness and ask him to maintain forever this gift, freely bestowed of his goodness, and to make it grow forever stronger. They must not rely on their vow and imagine that their own efforts will keep them from sin; instead, filled with awe, they

* * * * *

103 Erasmus quotes the preceding two sentences in the *Manifesta mendacia* (121 no 21) to illustrate his constant concern with the drawbacks of over-scrupulous formal confession.

104 Rom 8:14–16

must implore heaven's aid and ask that he who inspired their vow will strengthen and sustain it. In addition, such a vow implies not merely the avoidance of sin itself but of all the things by which they are usually tempted to sin.[105]

Having advanced this far, one is already restored to the church, already transformed from a slave of the devil to a child of God, already free from sin and[106] even, it is to be hoped, from chastisement, if both one's suffering and one's love are profound. How little now remains to be done, compared with what has gone before! Anyone who has truly humbled himself before God need be no more than mildly embarrassed before a man; like one nail driving out another,[107] shame will drive out shame and suffering drive out suffering. It will be no hardship to disclose in good faith to a priest things that will be said just once, especially if one remembers that through the priest one is speaking to God. But it would be advisable for people to examine their conscience every day and to confess to God from the heart, renewing their resolve; or if business will not allow, then at least once a week, resolving to see a priest whenever time and opportunity permit – unless they are so weak willed that they cannot rest until they have confessed to a priest.

I shall not discuss here how much importance should be given to the complications with which we mortals have surrounded confession; I mean such things as the powers of the priest to whom you confess, reserved cases, and censures.[108] However, in the interests of easing penitents' consciences,

* * * * *

105 Erasmus here describes in detail the conversion of attrition to contrition to which he has already alluded more than once (see 35 n68 above). But, like his medieval predecessors Abelard and Peter Lombard (see Tentler *Sin* 18–23), he is careful to maintain the role of the priest in penance and avoid the anticlerical and anti-sacramental implications that Luther did not hesitate to draw from 'contritionist' theory (*The Sacrament of Penance* LW 35 11–13).

106 and even ... profound] Added in 1530. Erasmus underlines his doubts concerning formal satisfaction (see 66–70 below), perhaps echoing the view of Peter Lombard that intense contrition may remit all penalties: *Sententiae* book 4 dist 20 c 1 s 6 and book 4 dist 20 c 3 s 1. See Thomas Tentler 'Peter Lombard's "On those who repent at the end"' *Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà* 9 (1996) 297–9.

107 *Adagia* I ii 4

108 These topics are discussed, for example, by Pseudo-Augustine *De vera et falsa poenitentia* 10.25 (PL 40 1122); Aquinas *Summa theologiae* III q 84–90; and Luther *Confitendi ratio* LW 39 41–3. The controversies concerned the extent of the priest's personal power to remit sins, the nature of cases reserved for special absolution by bishops or the pope (Tentler *Sin* 304–18), and the role of

I wish that the bishops and pontiffs would grant to those whom they entrust with the authority to hear confession the authority to absolve all sins of whatever kind or magnitude, together with the power[109] to relax certain censures, at least in the forum of conscience,[110] and finally the power to grant dispensations in cases where the difficulty is caused purely by human regulations. Examples of this might be a marriage made between two people related by blood but not within the degrees which, according to Holy Writ, prevent a legal marriage from being contracted, a marriage between two people joined by spiritual kinship,[111] or the infringement of a vow, especially if the infringement were committed by mistake and not out of malice. They could be given the power to relax the usual rules in other cases for compelling reasons. Who better to judge whether this needs to be done than the confessor before whom a whole human life is laid bare?

All this could be expedited if the pontiffs would repeal, on practical grounds, certain regulations which they introduced originally on religious grounds, and at the same time make clear which of their regulations are intended to make us guilty of sin and which not (if[112] in fact any mortal can make another guilty of sin). For those who have absolute power to repeal a regulation must also have the power to ensure that it does not carry with

* * * * *

ecclesiastical disciplinary justice, 'censures' being the general term for disciplinary measures short of excommunication.

109 'Power' is omitted in LB.

110 As opposed to the 'external forum' in which, for example, financial restitution might be imposed

111 These are among the eighteen ecclesiastical impediments to marriage enumerated by Erasmus in the *Institutio christiani matrimonii* of 1526 (CWE 69 265–8 and 269–70). In that treatise Erasmus points out that the prohibited degrees of consanguinity had been increased by the church beyond the norms established in both Jewish and Roman law. He is very scathing about 'spiritual kinship' (relationship resulting from the administration of sacraments), regarding it as an unnecessary ecclesiastical obstacle added to the existing complications of matrimonial law. The reinforcing passage 'but not within ... contracted' was added in 1530.

112 if in fact ... sin] The sceptical parenthesis was added in 1530; the implication is that, like Luther (*A Discussion on How Confession Should Be Made* LW 39 31), Erasmus would define sin only as an offence against divine law, whereas in the early church, at least, sin was regarded as an offence against the church with which the sinner must be reconciled (Rahner 170). The Council of Trent acknowledged that the people tended to equate infringements of ecclesiastical law with offences against natural or divine law, but made this an argument for more precise confession of the kind, number, and circumstances of sins (Denzinger 1681; Crichton 7).

it an imputation of sin unless there is evidence of persistent wickedness. But while things remain as they are, I would advise penitents to seek out a priest endowed with learning and honesty but also with sufficient legal authority to ensure that no particle of doubt remains in their mind that might force them to repeat their confession later.

For the rest, I do not much approve of over-careful explanations of all the circumstances, since the opinions[113] of the theologians on this point are usually based on a book called *De vera et falsa poenitentia*, whose attribution to St Augustine is known to be false.[114] Similarly, I disapprove of the excessive trepidation of those who think that, as the proverb says, a scorpion sleeps under every stone,[115] and who will turn every little fault into a mortal sin. For example, I once knew a man who was fasting; the day before at dinnertime he had eaten something sugary. But when he stood up, ready to sing mass before the people and the local ruler, who was also present, he licked his lips and felt a slight taste of sugar from a grain that had, I imagine, lodged in a hollow tooth; he rushed up to me, half-dead with worry, to ask whether he should go on with the service. I laughed at the man's silliness, telling him to take courage and get on with the divine service.[116]

Scruples of this kind almost always result from human regulations. For the rule that a priest must fast before mass was established – though not without justification – by men alone. As a result of it, some priests are terrified if, when they wash out their mouths, a drop of liquid slips down

* * * * *

113 *sententiae*, probably a reference to the famous work of that name by Peter Lombard, the 'Master of the Sentences,' to whom the contemporary English translator refers in a marginal note in *A lytle treatise*, H iv recto (see 31 above, introduction n55). On Lombard, see n1 above.

114 PL 40 1113–30; chapter 14 (1124–5) deals with 'circumstances' that may extenuate – or aggravate – a sin and even determine whether it be mortal or venial, as Erasmus had pointed out with some misgivings in his *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* (CWE 72 370). The authenticity of Augustine's book was questioned, on philological grounds, at the end of the fifteenth century by Joannes Trithemius (*De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis* 17; for Trithemius, see ODCC 1643). Luther also condemned its nefarious influence (*A Discussion on How Confession Should Be Made* LW 39 38); it had been quoted *in extenso* by such important figures as Gratian, Lombard, and Aquinas. On 'aggravating circumstances' in general, see Tentler *Sin* 116–20, and for a compact example *Poeniteas cito* 1154D.

115 *Adagia* I iv 34

116 Erasmus' reaction was criticized by 'Taxander' who, however, misquotes him, alleging that Erasmus wrote: 'I laughed at the pious man's silliness' (*Manifesta mendacia* 120 no 15 and n29).

their throats, and they either refuse to say mass or do so in fear and trembling. But it was never the intention of those who introduced the rule that, for example, if a priest was ministering to the sick and tasting their food for them, and[117] happened to swallow a morsel before spitting it out, he should refrain from saying mass as if he had broken his fast.

Here my opponents will croak that it is a mark of piety to fear guilt where there is no guilt.[118] I hear them, and I see the point; but to spend your whole life in a state of trepidation seems no less monstrous than to remain a child or an infant all your life. I prefer fussy piety to unrestrained criminal wickedness. But generally speaking those who are most fussy about this sort of thing are astonishingly nonchalant about more important things. How many I have known who would not have dared to say mass if they had inadvertently nibbled a bit of ginger to calm a queasy stomach, but would go ahead without a qualm while harbouring some implacable hatred against their neighbour and plotting their revenge.[119] But true charity, which opens up the heart, and staunch faith in Christ will easily dispel such minor scruples.

Similarly, some torment themselves over the method and the extent of preparation for confession, which those who wish to glory not only in the flesh[120] but also in the consciences of men assert must be absolutely right. I can accept without demur a modest amount of preparation, within our limits, so long as it is accompanied by a thorough hatred of one's misdeeds and a fixed and determined vow to change one's life for the better. But preparation will be less of a trial if people follow my advice and get into the habit of examining their lives and confessing to God every day, or at least once a week.

Now penitents must take care that as far as possible they keep their confession short and do not burden the priest's ears with superfluities. They can do this by mentioning only things that justifiably[121] weigh on their conscience, meaning those that are certainly, or are strongly suspected to be, mortal sins.[122] Of course, venial sins are not to be overlooked when it comes

* * * * *

117 and happened ... out] The parenthetical phrase was added in 1530 to clarify the example.

118 See 32 n57 above on this aphorism.

119 Luther denounces similar hypocrisy in his *Confitendi ratio* (LW 39 39–40).

120 Cf Gal 6:13, a passage on the redundancy of circumcision 'in the flesh.'

121 The adverb was added in 1530.

122 Erasmus' character Gaspar makes a similar remark in the colloquy *Confabulatio pia* (CWE 39 97), which was attacked as 'Lutheran' by the theologians of Cologne, presumably on the grounds that Luther had little faith in the ability

to examining and improving one's life. For if they are overlooked, they can lead to worse and, if we believe Augustine, they will gradually accumulate until finally they swamp the ship of conscience like a mighty wave[123] that suddenly sinks a ship. But some people turn confession into a cosy chat and babble on about anything and everything; women are particularly prone to this fault, since they enjoy chatting like this to men and will pour out to them a stream of complaints about their husbands or neighbours. I have also come across people who confess according to a formula – and a very long one – that they have learned. They use it to run through all the things they might have done, not just what they have done. I can think of nothing sillier.

The priest, too, must not suggest or allow during confession any topic unless it concerns penance, nor must the penitent speak of anything else. Unfortunately,[124] the sort of talk that goes on under cover of confession is all too notorious. Some people thoroughly approve of frequently repeated confession – and a general confession,[125] at that – and argue that it should be repeated, however slight the excuse. I thoroughly disagree with them. I consider it important that a person should reveal their misdeeds to a priest in good faith once and wash them away with a flood of tears. Then people will not grow old in everlasting grief, but regain their confidence and set out happily and eagerly to build a better life. If they happen to relapse, they need only tell the priest what they have done wrong since their last confession. Otherwise confession becomes a habit rather than a cure; some even begin to take pleasure in constantly shovelling the dirt, which should in itself be unpleasant. At the same time modesty, which, as I have said, is the most sure guardian of innocence, is gradually unlearned.

* * * * *

of mere humans to distinguish between mortal and venial sins (*The Sacrament of Penance* LW 35 20). Reformers felt that this process allowed confessors excessive control (Myers 'Humanism' 365). Erasmus replied in Epp 1301:15–31 and 1301:53–97; see also Payne 325 n77.

123 *unda decumana* 'the tenth wave,' proverbially higher than the rest; cf *Adagia* IV ix 54. The reference to Augustine may be to *Enarratio in psalmum* LXVI 7 (PL 36 809); WSA II-17 307–23 or *De civitate Dei* 21.5, but Erasmus probably found it in Peter Lombard *Sententiae* book 4 dist 16 c 3. Augustine's remedy against light sins was, like Erasmus', daily prayer (*De symbolo ad catechumenos* 7.15 PL 40 635–6); NPNF 3 374–5.

124 Unfortunately ... notorious] Added in 1530. Rosemondt (f 132 recto) makes similar observations. Erasmus quotes much of the rest of this paragraph in the *Manifesta mendacia* (120 no 20) to support his argument that it is preferable to confess well than to confess often.

125 That is, involving repetition of all or many of one's past confessions; on the benefits to be gained, see P.E. McKeever in NCE 11 81.

It is characteristic of certain people that, once they begin to appreciate something, they can never get enough of it. For example, long ago it did not seem irreverent to have some daily commemoration of the Virgin Mother, who could never be sufficiently praised. A canticle was recited at vespers, but a short one; now, however, in some rites it is much longer – and attended by greater ceremony and greater crowds – than the actual liturgy of vespers handed down by our forefathers. Nor was this enough: the tolling of the morning bell was introduced on the grounds that it is uncertain whether Gabriel greeted the Virgin at dawn or at dusk; it seemed an important issue. Special prayers to the Virgin were added to the hours, as if she were too little praised in the daily praise given to her Son. Many recite them before the traditional prayers, in case the Son should appear to take precedence over his Mother. Even that is not enough. The thanks given to God after a meal are unsatisfactory unless they include many special tributes to the Blessed Virgin. Would that not be enough for anyone? But then a dawn service is introduced, sung with a polyphonic setting, especially[126] in Britain, and with organ accompaniment too – not to mention the chapels dedicated specially to her in our churches and the parading of her statues.

'What are you getting at?' you will ask. I am trying to show that human waywardness allows many customs, though introduced with the best of intentions, to get out of hand. It seems that the same thing has happened with confession. At first it was acceptable to make confession just once in a lifetime.[127] Then it had to be repeated once a year. That seemed reasonable enough.[128] Then it began to be expected twice in Lent, over and above

* * * * *

126 especially in Britain] Added in 1530. Erasmus made similar criticisms of the cult of the Virgin elsewhere, for example in the *Modus orandi Deum* CWE 70 224–5, Ep 2284, and the colloquy Ἰχθυοφαγία CWE 40 675–762. On Erasmus' somewhat ambiguous approach to the whole question, see Léon-E. Halkin 'La Mariologie d'Erasme' *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 68 (1977) 32–55 (especially 47–8 on the topics here).

127 In the early church this was not merely *plausibile*, as Erasmus puts it, but mandatory: the public penance then in use could not be repeated (McNeil 14–15). On the consequences of this severe discipline, see Tentler *Sin* 6–7.

128 The custom of an annual ceremony of reconciliation for penitents on Maundy Thursday began in the fifth century, but the obligation on every Christian to confess once a year was laid down in the famous decree *Omnis utriusque sexus* (canon 21) of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 (Denzinger 812; translation in McNeil 413–14 and Tanner I 245; commentary in Tentler *Sin* 21–2, 61–2 and Myers *Sinning* 29–32). Erasmus cites this decree in his reply to Lee and remarks sardonically that those who profit from confession wish it could be enforced daily rather than annually (*Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72 364–5,

what the church had decreed. There are those who argue that it must be repeated every time one relapses into sin.[129] Others[130] demand that the whole Iliad of woes[131] be repeated in its entirety, if one has by some oversight forgotten a sin, unless one returns to the same priest who heard the earlier confession.Various other reasons have been found for repeat performances.

There is no end to the confessing. Before approaching the Lord's table, the priest will confess a first and then a second time to another priest. Again, coming down from the altar, he will make confession as a preliminary to the service. This seems to be for the people's benefit. Then again, in Italy and perhaps in other countries too, after the gospel reading the parish priest will turn and, in place of a homily on the gospel text, he will pronounce the prescribed form of confession and absolution.[132] There is also the ancient custom of sprinkling those entering the church with holy water. The same happens as they go out. This too is a form of confession. Moreover, the Eucharist is not given to lay people unless they are shriven. Again, confession is demanded of those already kneeling at the altar, at a moment when it would be better for the priest to say something that would inspire the communicants with love for the one whose body and blood they are taking. Finally, when the last struggle with death is upon us, how often is confession thrust upon us? The soul is trembling on the lips, when along comes a priest or monk to ask if anything has been forgotten and to pronounce absolution on a corpse. Let no one think that this is said to inspire hatred of confession; but at that moment some other song would be more appropriate, recalling, for instance, Jesus Christ's love for the human race, our faith in his goodness, the promises made in the gospel, the calamities of this life, or the joys of life in heaven.[133]

* * * * *

369). He cites it again in Ep 1300:21–5 and Ep 1301:53–97 in defending the colloquy *Confabulatio pia* against the attack of Nicolaas Baechem.

129 For discussion of these points among late medieval writers on confession, most of whom warned against the dangers of habitual confession, see Tentler *Sin* 72–80 and 121–4.

130 Others demand ... earlier confession] Added in 1530. Scholastic writers usually recommended reiteration if previous confessions could be considered for some reason invalid; see Clavasio f 48 and Tentler *Sin* 123–4.

131 *Adagia* I iii 26

132 References to the non-sacramental formulae of confession and absolution (*Confiteor ... Misereatur*) used in the mass; cf Rahner 162–3; Tentler *Sin* 79–80 and 111–13. Erasmus had mentioned the Italian custom in his reply to Lee (*Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72 365).

133 Erasmus was to develop these topics in the colloquy *Funus* (1526; CWE 40 763–95) and especially in *De praeparatione ad mortem* (1534; CWE 70 389–450); see Tentler 'Forgiveness' 119–33. Erasmus' letter to Joost Vroye (Ep 1347), which

But you have now been waiting some time, reader, to hear about a method of confessing that, when followed, will enable you to reveal all to the priest in a fitting way. A great many writers have published books on this, some even in the vernacular languages, listing every sin that we humans commit or may commit.[134] I will not deny that these books may safely be read by men who are forearmed by age and experience of the world, but in my opinion it is dangerous to spread them among ordinary people. Some priests make a similar mistake when they demand to know everything about everyone, without consideration for sex, age, and intelligence.

Now St Thomas wrote very fully on the genealogies of virtue and vice.[135] But I am writing this mostly for the benefit of lay people, and so some simpler method must be sought. To live the good life, a knowledge of the Creed and of God's commandments is necessary, even if there were no necessity for every one of us to confess. These are the things that the parish clergy ought briefly and clearly to pass on to their flock every year and even put into little books written in the vernacular. Although[136] it is quite true that frequent attendance at holy sermons will greatly help to prepare people for making proper confession, whether to God or to a man, reading holy books will have the same effect.

Now at the head of all the commandments stands faith, which works through love.[137] There are two kinds of love: love of God and love of one's neighbour. All who understand this will find it easy to see when they have turned aside from the paths of faith and charity. Now faith must not be lightweight, merely flitting about our lips, but deep-rooted in the heart, if what our mouths confess is to lead to salvation. Faith consists above all in believing what those Holy Scriptures, which all Christians unanimously accept, say about the past, promise for the future, or[138] instruct us to do, and in confidently placing in God all our hopes for the present and future life.

* * * * *

included a satirical passage on deathbed confessions (86–101), was printed with the *Exomologesis* in 1524. On the censure of this whole passage on confessional practice, see 37 n75 above.

134 On these books see 21 n15 above.

135 See for example Aquinas *Summa theologiae* II–I q 65 and q 73 and II–III passim.

136 Although . . . same effect] This sentence was added in 1530. The 'little books' are clearly to be different in content from the penitentials and summae (n15 above); in fact, they sound remarkably like Luther's *Small Catechism*, published in 1529 in the wake of a dispiriting tour of Saxony during which he observed the ignorance of the laity.

137 Gal 5:6

138 or instruct us to do] Added in 1530.

What myriads there are who profess the name of Christian but disbelieve or at least doubt the resurrection of the body, and some even the immortality of the soul! The vast majority, especially those who have achieved high office or honours, can be seen leading lives that suggest either that they do not believe Holy Writ or else that they never think about it. If they were seriously to examine their lives from time to time, they would realize how far they have strayed from their duty as Christians. And indeed this is the source of all sinfulness. In fact it is a grave sin to have neglected this part of our duty as Christians. People generally are quite oblivious to this and think it enough just to list their drinking bouts, adulteries, and thefts.

We[139] must pray constantly that God will increase our faith,[140] far more than we should pray for good health or a good harvest. From time to time other methods must be used to strike the spark of faith: meditation on the Scriptures, conversation with good Christians, holy thoughts.

Some people confess that they do not believe the Creed. That is no sacramental confession unless their intention is either to be instructed and brought to belief by the priest or to satisfy the church by some form of penance. To have doubts or be lukewarm in one's faith is an acceptable subject for confession, but unbelief is not.

Faith and charity, therefore, are the two principal yardsticks[141] against which we must measure every aspect of our lives, and they are the springs from which flows every act that is pleasing to God. If the springs are muddied or have run dry, even ostensible virtues become vices, whereas nothing sinful can emerge from pure faith and true charity, even if it looks like a sin. By contrast, people to whom faith and charity are completely alien lead lives that are, so to speak, just one long sin. But the common run of humanity, busy with the branches and the leaves, neglects the roots, even though the first and closest examination should have been given to them.[142]

People set themselves goals, such as wealth, worldly glory, or prestige, and with their eyes on their particular target they do much that is superficially virtuous: they give alms, they build monasteries, they fight for their

* * * * *

139 We must pray constantly ... without cheating] This and the following five paragraphs of pastoral advice concerning faith were added in 1530.

140 Cf Luke 17:5.

141 Erasmus uses the Grecism *gnomon*, literally the pin of a sundial, or a carpenter's square, but frequently used metaphorically.

142 A familiar metaphor in manuals of confession. The well-known *Rosetum* of Jan Mombaer even illustrated the kinds and species of sin diagrammatically by depicting a tree; see Tentler *Sin* 137.

country. Let others decide if such philanthropy actually offends God; certainly it curries no favour with God. By contrast, for those enlightened by faith and afire with charity, every act of their lives is governed by the twin goals of faith and charity; even as they restore their bodies with food and drink and refresh their minds with play, indeed even as they sleep, they are serving Christ.

Again, there are people whose natural inclination is never to do good disinterestedly but to weigh everything against their own advantage. And yet they seem to have no terrible vices: they keep away from drink and loose women; they pray and have time for mass. In short, they consider themselves good Christians, and so does everyone else. No disease is harder to cure, and to deal with it the wise confessor will need to be all the more alert. It is no use for such people to deceive themselves that they love God for his own sake, since they do not love their neighbour; or if they do, it is not for God's sake but out of self-interest. It is vital that princes and prelates be made aware that these are the twin springs of virtue, because they cannot perform their duties properly unless it is for God and the state.

Thus faith drives out all the little excuses that wickedness inspires people to make up. 'If I give to the poor, I shall be worse off. If I carry on my business or my trade without cheating, I will end up with no profit but a loss.' Such people obviously mistrust God's promises: 'Cast your cares upon the Lord, and he shall sustain you,' and 'I have not seen the righteous forsaken,' and 'Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be given to you.'[143] Do you believe that God is false and will not fulfil his promises?[144] Do you imagine that he is powerless and cannot fulfil them? Or do you think that he is sleeping and thus neglectful of his people's needs? This same faith will console the godly when an ungrateful world greets all their good works with indifference. They have entrusted their fortune to one who is faithful, and he will return it with incalculable interest. But it is generally true that those who make these excuses waste more than enough money on luxury, sex, and gambling and thereby squander even the profits they could have made if they did not enjoy their leisure more than their lucre. They are the sort who will say, without blushing: 'I can't make a living without cheating.'[145]

Now charity, as I have said, has two objects: God and our neighbour. In the first, three persons meet, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, who

* * * * *

143 Ps 55:22 (Vulg 54:23); Ps 37 (Vulg 36):25; Matt 6:33

144 An argument frequently used by Luther to demonstrate the inutility of formal confession (*The Sacrament of Penance* LW 35 12–14; Tentler *Sin* 355).

145 The passage of pastoral advice inserted in 1530 ends here (see 55 n139 above).

is to be loved above all things, both visible and invisible.[146] People show him too little love when they mistrust his promises, neglect his commandments, or place anything beside or above him, for example by holding their lives more dear than God and being less afraid to offend him than to die a thousand deaths. Our 'neighbour' takes on many guises. Here we must consider whether we have fulfilled our obligations to wives, parents, children, tutors, pupils, pastors, ruler, officials, relatives, friends, and benefactors – in short, to all Christians. What is more, we are all our own neighbour – and a self-inflicted wound is more hurtful than any. If you have hurt your neighbour's reputation, confess it. But if drink or a loose tongue has made you blurt out your own guilty secret, weep and wail; you have again hurt your neighbour, but[147] twice over: you have hurt both yourself and the person you confided in.

Concentrate your thoughts on all these things, and any sins worthy of penance will quickly spring to mind. It may jog your memory if you can recall where you lived at the time, what business you were engaged in, and with whom you lived. One thing will remind you of another.[148] Some people also seek grounds for confessing within themselves. For every sin is lodged either in the mind or in one of the five senses. Faith and love for God and one's neighbour belong to the mind, as do the vices that oppose them, especially the spiritual ones: envy, hatred, the desire for revenge, pride, hypocrisy, malice. But although every sin springs originally from the heart, those that involve debauchery, lust, violence, and assault are attached to the senses and the organs of the body.[149] Many sins are committed by the eyes, many by the ears, many by the belly and gullet, many by the hands – but most of all by the tongue. For the tongue by itself can commit all the sins that the other organs do in their respective ways. The tongue pours out blasphemies against God, the tongue slanders our neighbour, the tongue destroys gentle peace and foments deadly war, the tongue arranges illicit affairs and breaks sacred friendships, the tongue uses flattery, calumny, and filthy stories to infect innocent minds, the tongue, without sword and without poison, murders brothers and friends. In short, the tongue teaches heresy and turns Christians into Antichrists.[150]

* * * * *

146 A reminiscence of Col 1:16.

147 but twice ... confided in] Added in 1530.

148 Such aids to recollection are also recommended by the manuals of confession; see Rosemondt f 2 verso; Tentler *Sin* 110.

149 This division into fleshly and mental sins is characteristic of manuals of confession; see the similar list in *Poeniteas cito* 1153D and Escobar a 6 verso.

150 See especially *Lingua* CWE 29 249–412.

This should suffice, I think, to enable lay people to examine their consciences, provided they know the Apostles' Creed and the essentials of the gospel's teaching. Now I shall say something about the matters discussed at great length by the theologians, such as circumstances, omission, and restitution, but more as advice than precept.

It is wrong for the confessor to try to discover the penitent's accomplices by prying into circumstances that will allow the people involved to be identified. No one is obliged to divulge other people's misdeeds to the priest, if it can possibly be avoided.[151] Sometimes, of course, one cannot avoid betraying the identity, for example, of a girl abused by her father or a man who has pitched his prince into unjust war. In this case the theologians suggest finding a priest to whom both parties, or at least the one whose identity must be protected, are unknown.[152]

Again, where sins have been committed out of lust, some priests ask irrelevant questions out of lustful curiosity.[153] It is right that a man who has seduced a woman should specify whether he has committed adultery with someone's wife or incest with a nun, or whored with a prostitute, fornicated with a single girl or ravished a virgin, but he has no need to describe all the details of the act, because they do not change the species of the sin.[154] But in such cases people will often pass over circumstances that are more relevant than these vulgar details. The theologians distinguish adultery from simple fornication, but often the circumstances make fornication a far more deadly sin than adultery. It is a lesser sin to commit adultery by chance, when an opportunity happens to arise, than to use wicked wiles over a long period to entrap and then to seduce a good, innocent girl, from a good family and destined for an honourable marriage, and then to shame her by boasting of the deed, and[155] even to prostitute her to others, which some courtiers seem to find very amusing. Again, it is a lesser sin if someone happens to

* * * * *

151 A long-standing principle 'unanimously' upheld by the medieval theologians (Tentler *Sin* 93–4); see for example the regulations of 1197 quoted in McNeil 412 section 14.

152 Gerson also gives this advice in connection with incest (Tentler *Sin* 94); on Gerson see 31 n56 above.

153 Most manuals of confession (eg Rosemondt f 132 recto) warn against this, but there were exceptions; see the remarkable examples in Tentler *Sin* 91–3 and 196.

154 The obsession of medieval confessors – and penitents – with such details is well illustrated by Tentler's chapter on 'Sex and the Married Penitent' 162–232. Fornication with a nun was considered 'spiritual incest.'

155 and even ... amusing] Added in 1530.

find something in a holy place and steals it away because he is poor, than if someone who is far from destitute enters a house by night, armed with a dagger, and plunders a layman's strongbox or robs a poor man who can barely support his wife and many children. For it is not only the time, the place, and the person that must be considered, but also the malice of the intent, the magnitude of the temptation, and the number of people harmed by a single sin. For example, if someone kills a man on whose counsel the whole state depended, that single crime harms a great many, as[156] does someone who incites a prince to play the tyrant.

Now most people identify sins of omission and also transgression according to human regulations: for example not attending mass on a Sunday or eating meat on a Friday.[157] But more serious are the sins of omission that break God's commandments, such as neglecting an opportunity to help one's neighbour. Again, it is a graver sin to hate one's neighbour than not to abstain from eating meat on a Friday. But a sin of omission is graver if failure to act at the same time inflicts great harm on one's neighbour. If a neighbour's life is in danger and one does nothing to save him despite having the chance, then it is murder. The same is true if evil replaces the good that has not been done. To take an example: the Lord's day was given to us so that at leisure we might examine our conscience, reconcile ourselves to God, and rekindle our love for God and our neighbour by pious meditation, by prayer, by attending sermons, and by reading or discussing religious matters. Thus it is a sin twice over to spend the whole day in silly games, whoring, drinking, telling dirty stories, or even in quarrelling and brawling.

This is a sin that is particularly prevalent among those who occupy positions of power or authority: princes, bishops, parish priests, abbots,[158] magistrates, heads of households. Just as these people do a lot of harm by their misdeeds, so they do great harm when they fail in their duty. It is not sufficient that the pope should not himself stir up wars between the princes; it will be considered a crime if he does not make strenuous efforts to settle existing wars. It will be laid to a prince's charge not only if he robs and oppresses the nation himself, but also if he does not use the power he

* * * * *

156 as does ... tyrant] Added in 1530. The two illustrative additions are suggestive of Erasmus' characteristic hostility towards courtiers and the courtly ambience.

157 Erasmus had developed this particular theme in the *De esu carnium* of 1522 (ASD IX 1–50).

158 The abbots were added to the list, provocatively, in 1530.

possesses to remove officials who are unjust or who in other ways subvert the liberties of the subject. His sin will be twice as great if, corrupted by money or some other inducement, he has deliberately entrusted an official position to someone he knows to be a scoundrel. A bishop is guilty twice over if, first, he makes no attempt to change his flock for the better and if, second, he actually teaches them corruption through unsound doctrine and his own perverse way of life; or[159] else, corrupted by greed, he knowingly entrusts the care of his flock to someone unworthy. This being so, the prince or bishop must be neither idle nor lazy, but always alive to any opportunity of doing good.

Every private individual must try to do the same, if possible, and seize every opportunity to do good; let the rich use their wealth, the learned their authority, the eloquent their skill with words, the old the respect they have earned, the court favourites their influence, and the young their energy. Young people will confess their involvement in brawling or whoring, but will not admit that they have allowed so many of their best years to slip by unprofitably, when they had the chance to learn things that would be useful for the rest of their lives. In such cases one realizes that the priorities of both penitents and confessors are often distorted. A prince may confess that he has killed with his own hand, and that is indeed a serious crime to confess; the life of a prince should be blameless in every respect. But the same man will perhaps not confess that the innocent are being slaughtered, the blameless plundered, and unspeakable crimes committed in a war sparked off by his ambition or anger. He will confess that he has perhaps exceeded his powers in confiscating someone's property, but he will not confess that he has knowingly and deliberately sold control of tax collection to someone patently rapacious and unjust, and is well aware that countless citizens will be robbed by him.

Consideration must be given here to the duties attached to any position, and sins of omission judged accordingly. It is the special task of the bishop to nourish his flock with holy doctrine. But perhaps[160] he does not feed them or take pains to appoint suitable shepherds, preferring, in exchange for money or favours, to entrust the cure of souls to the unworthy. Though he may not confess this, he may well confess to whoring or to missing evening prayers. Similarly, it is the prince's special duty to protect everyone and to defend the freedom and peace of the nation. But while he will keep quiet the many great atrocities committed on his orders, or at best

* * * * *

159 or else . . . unworthy] Added in 1530
160 perhaps] Added in 1530

because of his negligence, he will confess that he failed to attend mass on a given day or did not say his hours. But these are not sins peculiar to a prince. Nowadays too a custom has infiltrated some princes' courts whereby every single day they run right through all the prayers that priests must say, and during that time they are free from interruptions. Who would dare to interrupt a prince at prayer? Now I do not condemn religion in a prince, if in fact religion is found in such things, but I do condemn it if princes make religious observance an excuse to neglect the special duties that pertain to their office: so many widows and wards unlawfully exploited, so many commoners suffering indignities. God will not be indignant if to deal with such matters a prince lets his prayers or even his mass be interrupted; for[161] human institutions must always yield before the higher obligations of charity.

Thus the priest's first concern must be to establish the station in life of his penitent.[162] Now since, as some have said, not unreasonably, penitents speak to God through the priest, the judgments made must of course be correct in the sight of God, who weighs everything by the intentions of the heart. These days many attach the greatest importance to what is fleshly and ritualistic, and the least importance to what is spiritual. Again, they place a high value on what has been established by mere mortals, and neglect what was commanded by God. For example, who will not execrate a priest if he appears with his head unshaven? But no one execrates him if he is caught in a drunken brawl in a brothel. Who will not revile a monk if he puts on layman's clothing?[163] But it is considered merely comical if a monk – still wearing his cowl – goes whoring and drinking, breaks up people's homes, or practises magic. It is a horrible crime for a priest to break his fast before mass or matins, but it is considered trivial if a priest approaches the Lord's table unreconciled with a brother he has wronged. There may be some good reason why mere mortals punish trifling offences more severely, but in confession, at least, the judgments should be commensurate with the offence.

Now the course of our discussion brings me to the subject of restitution. I admit that I have nothing new to say on this topic, given[164] that the

* * * * *

161 for human . . . charity] This challenging clause was added in 1530.

162 This was generally recommended as a preliminary to confession by medieval writers; see Tentler *Sin* 84.

163 No doubt an allusion to Erasmus's own 'apostasy' in exchanging the habit of his order for the dress of a secular priest; see for example Ep 296:181–218 and Ep 1581A:3–19, 87–143.

164 given that . . . discussing it] Added in 1530. For discussions of this topic, simply defined as 'any satisfaction that must be done to someone else,' see Tentler *Sin* 340–3.

theologians have devoted enormous tomes to discussing it. I shall merely give some advice on the mistakes that the less experienced may make.

People have an extraordinary obsession with restoring money or clothing. By contrast, those who have perverted innocent minds with poisonous words, or destroyed their neighbour's peace of mind with their virulent tongue, or damaged a reputation by slander, or incited princes or people to war by perverse counsel, all think little of repairing the damage they have done. But to many reputation is more precious than life, and nowhere could restitution be more necessary. But, people will say, this is an area in which restitution can hardly ever be made. All the more reason to try to do whatever can be done and to regret constantly that full reparation cannot be made. These days some empty-headed courtiers think that they have splendidly compensated a girl they have dishonoured – and often prostituted to others afterwards – if they finally farm her out with a little dowry to a husband; they almost seem to think that they themselves deserve a reward for finding the girl some sort of husband. She is married, but to some nobody, whereas she should have been married, unsullied, to a man of honour. Nor does the wedding expunge the damage to her reputation. Some compensation! And yet, fortified by this, they proceed to seduce more girls, and still more after that.

Again, when it comes to things that merely make us poorer, some practices are so regular and widespread that they are too commonplace to be considered theft. In this area most artisans who handle other people's goods, but especially millers and tailors, have a bad reputation, so much so that there is even a proverb: 'We are all thieves in our own trade.'[165] But the worst offenders among them are those who adulterate food and drink, for example diluting their wine with water or doctoring it with alum, lime, sulphur, salt, or other substances, because they not only steal people's money, but also damage their health and are little better than poisoners. How much disease and death have we seen caused by adulterated wine? But it is all,

* * * * *

165 A Dutch proverb not recorded in the *Adagia* but found in an anonymous collection published c 1495; see R. Jente ed *Proverbia communia* (Bloomington 1947) no 56, although the Latin translation is different. I am grateful to István Bejczy for supplying this reference. A German version, together with Erasmus' Latin wording, is cited in K.F.W. Wander *Deutsches Sprichwörter Lexikon* (Leipzig 1867–80) II 338–9 sv Handwerk nos 23 and 68; the Latin follows the *Viridiarium* of J.G. Seybold (Nuremburg 1677) 652 which, however, gives no source. Tradesmen and their wiles figure frequently in the contemporary practical literature of sin; see Tentler *Sin* 163–4.

apparently, part of the game. Moreover, their favourite victims are those who least deserve to be cheated. Brotherly love should insist that those who are prevented by ignorance from assessing goods properly should be assisted by the seller's sense of fair play. But these days you will not find many prepared to miss any chance to cheat and make a quick profit. And yet, though we all make a living by mauling one another, we still consider ourselves Christians. And since it has become routine, we do not even bother to confess it or, if we do, we think it quite sufficient simply to have told a priest what we have done.

Now who is more obligated to make full restitution than the ruling classes? And yet it appears that the rules of restitution do not apply to them. They take refuge in 'arrangements.' It is a kind of remedy, and I do not condemn it. But I am afraid that many of the arrangements made between mortals will not be ratified by God. They say[166] that there will be nothing left to feed their wives and children if they restore all that they have taken unlawfully, even though it was robbery that made them great men and advanced the family fortunes, enabling them to live in pomp and luxury. If they truly repent of their misdeeds, let them throw away the damnable dice, practise thrift not extravagance, and take up farming or some other honest calling; this will give them the means to make restitution. Let them guide their children into the same paths. If, after assiduously following this plan, they still lack the wherewithal, perhaps an arrangement will make up for it.

Some make the excuse that those they cheated are dead – but their heirs are still alive. Others say that they do not know exactly whom they have robbed but make no effort in the meantime to find out; they think they are completely in the clear if they have purchased title to the property for a few coins. If people can be entitled to keep their ill-gotten gains, why should they not also be entitled to commit adultery and murder? Even those who have robbed churches or monasteries can settle their conscience for a few coins. Do they really not know to whom they should make restitution? But they fear for their reputation. They should have thought of that when they embarked on their crimes. However, there is a kind of remedy available here too: let them make restitution through a third party who can be trusted implicitly. Or ultimately, if we are to accept this sort of

* * * * *

166 The rest of the discussion on restitution (to 66 'add their own') was added in 1530. Erasmus also attacked arrangements (*compositiones*) in the colloquies *Militaria* and *Funus* (CWE 39 58 and 40 773).

excuse, I think it would be safer to give the money to the poor rather than to intermediaries.

Now there are some species of robbery and theft that few people will confess, let alone consider making restitution for them, and most of these concern agreements and contracts. I was at a banquet where someone was boasting that he had sold a horse for six angels when he knew it was not worth six pence.[167] These days what wine merchant will not pretend to the uninitiated that wine from Auxerre or Spain is Beaune, or that Louvain wine is Rhenish,[168] and sell heavily diluted wine as full strength? Would it cross any of their minds to make restitution, even though what they do is sheer robbery? Is it not a mere game today to sell a dog's hide as Roman hide or to pretend that a bolt of scarlet cloth has been dyed with cochineal when it has not? Who will not extort four times the price from a naive customer, if they can? I know that the lawyers say that vendors are not always compelled to reveal the defects in their merchandise. But the gospel law does not absolve them: 'Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you.'[169]

Has any barrister ever confessed that due to incompetence or deceit on his part a plaintiff has suffered a material loss? What can I say about soldiers, who will justify any crime under the laws of war? But those are the laws of the devil, not of war. Again, carters and merchant seamen employed to transport wine will exercise their 'right' to drink as much as they like of it – and only the best, at that! They will top up fine wine with foul water, even if what they are transporting is destined for the sick. Will any of them confess this as theft? Will any think of making restitution? This kind of

* * * * *

167 The angel was an English gold coin worth 6s 8d, which means that the horse was sold for more than eighty times its worth; cf CWE 1 342; CWE 14 424–86 and appendix.

168 Beyond the literal sense, this passage, with its reminiscence of Matt 9:17 ('new wine in old bottles'), seems to contain a jibe at Erasmus' opponents, the theologians of Spain and Louvain. 'Auxerre' may possibly indicate Paris; the adjective *Altissiodorensis* (usually *Autissiodorensis*) 'Auxerrois' would bring to mind the church of St Germain L'Auxerrois opposite the Louvre (the French court was known as the 'cour de St Germain'). Less likely connections are the thirteenth-century Paris theologian William of Auxerre, whom Noël Béda admired (Ep 1579:29), and the humanist Germain de Brie of Auxerre (Ep 1597). It is doubtful that 'Beaune' and 'Rhenish' are used allegorically, since these were (and are) renowned wines. But perhaps the references to 'Roman hide' and 'scarlet' (the colour worn by cardinals) that follow shortly after may hint at doctrinal inadequacies among the prelates.

169 An echo of Tob 4:16; cf Matt 7:12 and Luke 6:31.

person, being stiff-necked,[170] must not be merely admonished in confession but severely rebuked and told to root out of their hearts the frivolous excuses they habitually use. 'Carters (or sailors) have their rights where food and drink are concerned,' they say, 'and everyone does it.' But these rights are written on Satan's tablets, not in Christ's laws.

The tailors, too, have found a colourful excuse. 'The cloth is placed with us,' they say, 'to be made into a suitable garment. The skilled craftsman will make one out of fewer lengths than the unskilled; anything left over is the reward for skill, and the client is still satisfied.' Thieves will never hang if the accused can pronounce their own sentences like this. Ask if the client is satisfied! I shall pass over the goldsmiths and jewellers who adulterate their materials with alloys, who shave the metals they are given, who sell paste gems as real ones. But it is remarkable how lax even the civil laws are in this area, though they will crucify some wretched petty thief who has lifted five drachmas from a carelessly guarded purse.[171]

In areas where it is the state that suffers most, it would be worthwhile to make an example of someone from time to time to deter the others. I shall say nothing here about the adulteration and revaluation of the coinage, since that is the business of princes and magistrates. I have already touched on it in my *Institutio principis christiani*.[172] So I come to those who hire out their services by the day. They do not consider it theft if they take four days to complete a job that could have been finished in one, living all the while at someone else's expense and taking the agreed payment for each day. Nor do they consider it lying to make promises they do not keep. But how do they excuse their deceitfulness? 'That is the rule of our trade,' they say. No, the rule of your trade is not to steal or lie but to use your skills to complete the job in good faith.

However, greater sinners even than these are the apothecaries and doctors, whose watchword is 'quid pro quo.' Sometimes apothecaries will sell one product as something else or instead of medicine supply stuff that is rotten, useless, and by now poisonous as well. You ask for rhubarb, but you get something that was rhubarb forty years ago. There is no spice, no amber, still less any root or herb, however strong and durable, that will not fade over a long period of time. 'But,' they say, 'unless we mix old

* * * * *

170 Exod 32:9, 33:3; cf 23 n23 above.

171 Five drachmas would amount to a trifling amount.

172 *Institutio principis christiani* 4 (CWE 27 262). Erasmus' ambiguity here is deliberate, since in the earlier work he had suggested that governments profited most from manipulation of the coinage.

stock with the new, we will end up starving.' It would be better to end up dead than to sell your sick brother, who should be treated for free anyway, something that will make the illness worse or perhaps hasten his death. The same sins are found among the doctors. Here it would also be a good idea to inquire into the public responsibilities of those who govern our cities.

Charity requires that in time of need we relieve our brother's poverty. And yet some, who consider themselves Christians, will increase the price of their goods in line with the urgency of their brother's need. Someone has a pomegranate bought for a few pence; the patient is in danger, and there are no others to be had; the pomegranate is worth its weight in gold.[173] Similarly, some will hide away their grain so that if there happens to be a shortage of grain, they can sell it for four or ten times the usual price – and they do not realize that this is sheer robbery. I have given a few examples; informed readers will add their own.[174]

Let me make an end by adding a few words about satisfaction.[175] There are two kinds, public and private. As concerns the public kind, I would wish any priest entrusted with the authority to hear confession to be given powers to moderate the penance according to the circumstances or even, if the case warrants it, to change it to a private penance. For if the Fathers who instituted public acts of satisfaction allow incumbent bishops the right to increase or decrease the prescribed penalty according to the station in life of the penitent,[176] why should not the same power be entrusted to those who stand in for the bishops in this most burdensome of tasks? If these functions have been entrusted to someone less than suitable, the blame must fall on the bishops anyway.

Now when it comes to penalties imposed in private, the priest must be like a skilful doctor who will not prescribe any medicine to any patient at

* * * * *

173 The medicinal qualities of the pomegranate, like those of the purgative rhubarb, were well known: 'Pomegranates be of good juyce, and profitable to the stomacke' (T. Elyot *The Castel of Helth* 2.7 2nd ed [London 1541] 21).

174 The inserted passage on restitution (see n166 above) ends here. Thus the majority of Erasmus' own examples was added in 1530.

175 Works of satisfaction, or external penance, followed contrition and confession to complete the procedure of penance. Traditionally (eg Clavasio f 305) they consisted of prayer (against pride), fasting (against concupiscence), or alms (against avarice), though others such as vigils and flagellation were available (Tentler *Sin* 320). Erasmus generally championed contrition at the expense of satisfaction, particularly since he found no scriptural basis for the latter; see Payne 211–13.

176 On public penance in the early church, see 28 n45 and 52 n127 above.

random but the one that he knows will be most effective, given the nature of the disease and the station of the patient. For the same illness he may prescribe one thing for a strong man and something else for a weaker one, one thing for someone brought up in a particular way and something else for someone of different background; indeed, he will often prescribe, for the same person and the same sort of disease, one remedy when they are young and another when they are old.[177] These days a good many priests prescribe nothing more than a few short prayers. 'Read the psalm "Have mercy on me, O God",' they say, 'with the collect "God to whom it belongs." In addition the *Salve regina*, with the collect "Grant us your servants." Plus the psalm for the departed *De profundis*, with the collect "God of the faithful".'[178] I do not condemn any of this, as I recognize the great value of obedience, but confessors do better to prescribe prayers containing a specific remedy against the evil by which they feel the penitent is threatened. For example, our forefathers picked out certain psalms as being particularly appropriate to certain kinds of prayer.

It would also be useful to prescribe, instead of prayers, some reading matter[179] that will inspire the penitent to hate the sin that troubles him. Let us say that someone is tempted by paganism or Judaism and has unsound views on the Christian faith, being led astray either by his inexperience or by reading poets and philosophers. He must be told to spend an hour or two every day reading Lactantius[180] or the books against pagans, Jews, and heretics bequeathed to us by Origen, Tertullian, Cyprian, Chrysostom, and others.[181] It is almost impossible that someone who has carefully read Origen's books against Celsus[182] should not develop sounder views on Christ's most holy teaching. There are various books by the holy Fathers in praise of chastity, in reprobation of slander, on the instruction of monks and

* * * * *

177 The same advice, using the same simile, is given in *Poeniteas cito* 1156A.

178 Respectively Ps 51 (Vulg 50), the antiphon *Salve regina*, and Ps 130 (Vulg 129: two of the seven penitential psalms), accompanied by liturgical prayers of contrition (ie collects), two of them used in the mass for the dead and the other (*Concede nos famulos tuos*) in several masses of the Virgin.

179 Erasmus' suggestion that appropriate reading be imposed is unusual – but characteristic of him.

180 No doubt Erasmus has in mind Lactantius' *Institutiones divinae*, a comprehensive defence of Christianity and attack on paganism completed in AD 313. Lactantius' style is praised in the *Ciceronianus* CWE 28 412 and *De contemptu mundi* CWE 66 170.

181 Erasmus cites the prominent pre-Augustinian Fathers (third to fourth centuries AD) involved in the struggle against heterodoxy.

182 PG 11 641–1632, a vast apologetic tract of AD 246, refuting the Hellenistic philosopher Celsus

clergy, on preserving widowhood, on the duty of bishops, on the duty of the prince, on the sanctity of marriage, on concord, and on countless other virtues and vices.[183] From among them a reading must be chosen for each individual that will do most to remedy the failing of which the penitent stands confessed. All must however be urged to read attentively and with the sincere desire to reform their lives. It is a good idea to prescribe a whole programme of study for the young, who are often at risk because they have too much time on their hands. I do not entirely approve of prescribing for youngsters, at a tender age that still has its playful side, fasting, vigils, or other trials that may lead to ill health in later years. It is preferable to reform the younger generation by teaching them respect for their elders and giving them useful things to do.

For the rich, it is correct to prescribe generosity to the poor, but I think they should be warned not to misplace their gifts. There is no reason to disapprove if someone endows a chapel, an altar, a monastery, a school, a college, or something similar. Yet alms are holiest when they relieve the present needs of our neighbours and disappear from sight, so to speak, when they pass from the hands of the giver to the recipient; their fame may perish in the eyes of humanity, but it is all the more secure in the eyes of God. Moreover, if the penitent's age and physical constitution seem to require the imposition of a fast, he should also be advised that if he has sufficient means, he should give to the needy whatever money he saves by abstaining from food. Some confessors prescribe long pilgrimages, which means that the penitent, equipped with an iron breast-plate, must beg the fare and set out for Rome to[184] visit Peter's portals, or Jerusalem, or James at Compostela, a kind of penance I would not wish to condemn entirely. However, it is not right to prescribe it for those who have spouses and children at home who will be exposed to hardship or danger by their absence.[185] It is also a hazardous prescription for adolescents or young women who are at an age when their honour and chastity are better protected by staying at home.

This kind of penalty is best left to secular magistrates, being rather similar to some of the punishments they impose: they can order a flogging,

* * * * *

183 These subjects are treated by the Fathers from Tertullian (*De pudicitia* 'On Chastity') to St Bernard (*De detrectatione* 'On Slander') but are not all titles of specific works.

184 to visit . . . Compostela] Added in 1530. Despite the next remark, futile pilgrimages were a frequent target of Erasmus' satire; his views are encapsulated in the colloquy *Peregrinatio religionis ergo* CWE 40 619–74.

185 The rest of the treatise, apart from the brief valedictory passage, was added in 1530.

amputate a hand, cut off an ear, put out the eyes, perforate the tongue, or brand the forehead or hand. None too different were those solemn penalties that the church used to impose in public, less to satisfy God than men, though also to satisfy God.[186] However, even the secular magistrate would be better advised to punish certain kinds of theft, or those other crimes that are not serious enough to warrant capital punishment (especially among Christians), by making criminals undertake service to the community instead of burning or mutilating them. For example, in the past some were fettered and made to work for their creditors, while others were chained and made to dig the fields or cut down trees; those who knew some sedentary craft were more suited to the workhouse. This kind of punishment is useful in two ways: it rehabilitates the offenders instead of destroying them, and it serves the state or the victim of the crime.[187]

The priest will tell certain penitents that they must sincerely forgive the person who has done them wrong, attempt to overcome evil with good,[188] and seek his friendship with kind words and deeds. Even if this cannot be achieved, they must at least expel from their heart all desire for revenge and try to forget the wrongs they have suffered. The Lord Jesus himself recommended this kind of satisfaction to us, just as the Holy Scriptures commended almsgiving to us.[189] The priest will therefore ensure that, if he has prescribed some penance involving pain or toil, the toil will be a labour of love; it will not endanger the health of the penitent's body and make it less fit to obey the spirit's instructions, but will simply put a check on its waywardness.

On[190] this point I am not seeking a fight with those who say that satisfaction has no role to play in penance. 'God alone,' they say, 'can remit sins, and if he remits someone's guilt, he also remits the penalty. For the guilty

* * * * *

186 The schoolmen identified three kinds of penance: solemn, public, and private, of which the first was provided for those guilty of capital sins that hurt the church and required a special ceremony of absolution (Lombard *Sententiae* book 4 dist 14 c 3). The kind of ceremonies performed in both the early and contemporary church are described by Erasmus 27–8 above.

187 A similar proposal is made in More's *Utopia*, when Raphael Hythlodaye describes the customs of the mythical Polylerites; see *The Complete Works of St Thomas More* 4 (New Haven and London 1965) 74–8.

188 Cf Rom 12:21.

189 See for example Matt 6:1–4 and 14–15. In his annotation on 2 Cor 7:10 Erasmus had extolled works of satisfaction that are helpful to others, rather than painful and useless like the torments inflicted in the Underworld (LB VI 774D).

190 On this point ... primary importance] This paragraph and the next were recommended for deletion in the *Index expurgatorius* LB X 1820A.

party is released through charity and the Holy Spirit, and that release leaves them nothing to do except grow ever stronger in charity. This,' they say, 'is the only true satisfaction in the eyes of God.'[191] From this they conclude that papal indulgences cannot relax penalties, except those imposed, or potentially imposed, by a mere mortal, and then only for the most pressing of reasons.

I would not wish totally to condemn papal relaxations, but I think it would be safer to hope for full remission of our sins from charity and from Christ's compassion than from mere human documents. Where there is no charity, what use is a bull? Where there is enough, the document is superfluous. Where it is deficient to some extent, they say that the pope cannot grant pardon, which belongs to God alone. The Holy Scriptures are silent on indulgences, as indeed are the early Fathers of the church. Modern theologians have always differed in their opinions on this subject, writing about it tentatively and incoherently. They must make up their own minds, but it is undeniable that we have the gospel's guarantee, in that the woman's many sins were forgiven her because she loved much.[192] I shall not take up arms against anyone who maintains that indulgences are not to be ignored, so long as they do not make that an excuse to ignore the points that are indisputably of primary importance.

From what I have already said it is clear enough, I think, how we may avoid the disadvantages often entailed in the performance of this form of confession, which are partly the confessors' fault and partly the penitents'. However, for the sake of the less expert, I am quite willing to provide remedies for each of them in rough outline. Such is human life that everything we do is flawed in some way.

So, the first disadvantage will do less harm if the prelates, and others whose business it is, are on their guard and ensure that the power to hear confession is not handed out irresponsibly to just anyone, but only to men of mature years and proven integrity, who are also sober and capable of silence. Priests must be censured if in their cups they blab, for amusement, whatever they have heard in the privacy of the confessional. If they ever

* * * * *

191 This is the logical conclusion to the 'contritionist' theory of Abelard, Lombard, and others (47 n105 above) but, with its specific hostility to indulgences, obviously recalls Luther's stance, inspired originally by his opposition to that form of forgiveness (*The Sacrament of Penance* LW 35 9–10).

192 Luke 7:47; the underlying point is that the woman's sins were forgiven her unconditionally and without penance. On Erasmus' generally unsympathetic views on indulgences, see Payne 214–16.

require advice on these matters, they must confer in private with learned and responsible colleagues.[193] Similarly they must be rebuked if in their holy sermons they blurt out secrets of the confessional that would be better concealed. The confessor will be more reliable if he is sober, forearmed with a modicum of prayer, if he approaches his task with a sense of awe, and if his questioning goes no further than is necessary to establish the nature of the sin.[194] As for the penitent, although it is sometimes risky to recall one's sins, it is certainly more often riskier to ignore them. Thus the wise and faithful minister of God will so arrange things that he will not poison the minds of the inexperienced and weak, but will not allow them to ignore something that, if ignored, could not have been remedied or avoided.

For the second, similar remedies can be prescribed: silence and integrity on the part of the priest. For the true and holy shepherd will not be lulled by this into complacency about his own sins, but inspired to greater fear and love of God, and to more earnest prayers and greater vigilance on behalf of the Lord's flock, when he sees the monstrous sins that people fall prey to, if once they have thrown off the Lord's yoke through ignorance or malice. This sin could not have happened had their shepherd safeguarded them with teaching, advice, rebukes, and entreaties. For the rest, they should not publicly name the crimes of those who are punished by the law for unnatural intercourse, sorcery, or other such villainy.

The third, since it cannot arise unless the priest is at fault, must be remedied by appointing men who, rather than swelling with pride,[195] will weep for the woes of humanity; witness St Paul, who admits that he was humiliated and brought to tears because there were among the Corinthians some who deserved a severe rebuke.[196] And sometimes the sins of the people fall on the head of the priests because they do not give the attention they should to teaching them the straight ways of the Lord. When such priests remind themselves that the Lord will demand his sheep from the hand of the shepherd,[197] they should be stirred to repentance rather than pride. Any one of all the sins that have ever been committed by humanity

* * * * *

193 This notion of conference was enjoined by the decree *Omnis utriusque sexus* (canon 21) of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 (text in McNeil 414 and Tanner I 245; cf Tentler *Sin* 99).

194 On the medieval debate over the degree of questioning to be used, see Tentler *Sin* 88–95; most manuals give similar advice to Erasmus'.

195 Literally 'raising their crests'; cf 24 n27 above.

196 Cf 2 Cor 2:1–4 and 12:21.

197 Cf Ezek 34:10.

can be committed again by any individual, and if any are not committed, we owe it to God's goodness, not to our own powers. Therefore the nature we share should not fill us with pride, but move us to pity. The priest who does not harbour feelings of paternal tenderness towards his flock is unsuited to his task. Would any father whose son fell victim to some horrible disease treat him with more disdain than before and not hasten instead, with grief in his heart, to get him cured? Now, if freedom is dear to you, then freedom from guilt should be equally dear. A doctor has no hold over someone who makes the effort to stay healthy. If by your own fault you have succumbed to illness, you must take especial care so that you stand free before God. Finally, just as when you are ill you choose a doctor to cure you – and not to rebuke you – you should do the same when choosing a priest.

As for those who identify the fourth disadvantage, are they doing more than point out that there are some bad priests? I wish that I could gainsay them! But we have not dispensed with the art of medicine simply because we know that there are bad doctors. It just makes us more careful to ensure that there are good doctors; it makes us more circumspect in choosing whom to trust with our treatment. In the end, it is the duty of the prelates to deal with these priests who put the sacraments to shameful uses, in such a way that it acts as a warning to the rest.

Of the fifth I can say no more than that exceptional cases must not be forced to prove the general rule. How few do we actually know who have blurted out their secrets in a fit of fever or frenzy? And who is crazy enough to trust a madman? Here again it will help to choose a suitable priest, as I have already said several times. Ultimately, if your crime puts your life at risk, and you distrust the parish priest and your own clergy, you are allowed to go to a place where you are a stranger and to confess, in disguise or in the shadows, to a stranger.[198] But in the end your soul's health should be more precious than your body's. To heal your body, you will perhaps show a doctor the wound you received while committing a capital offence; are you afraid to do so to heal your soul?[199]

Let that be my reply to the penitent. As for the priest, I admit that it is a great and arduous task to visit, with obvious risk to their lives, people afflicted by the plague or similar diseases; but they must remember that

* * * * *

198 This solution, which was thought to imperil principles of jurisdiction and discipline (discussed at length by Clavasio ff 51–3), was allowed in exceptional circumstances; see Tentler *Sin* 61–4; McNeil 413.

199 Medieval manuals use the same image to stress the necessity of telling everything if one is to be healed; see Tentler *Sin* 116.

they have taken up an arduous profession, and if they wish to be good shepherds, they must whenever necessary expose their very lives for the well-being of their flock, especially when souls are at stake. It is splendid work that they do, but they may expect a splendid reward; in the meantime, however, they are allowed to take precautions to ward off infection. For they are not compelled to put God to the test. If a priest is indispensable to the people and entrusts himself in absolute faith to God, he will not die before his time, but the Lord will fulfil his promise: even though what they drink be fatal, it will do them no harm.[200]

A great many will dare to approach a plague victim in pursuit of a legacy; will they fear to do so when their neighbour's soul is in peril? However, it would be common courtesy to light a fire and fumigate the room the priest is to enter, to make it as clean and safe as possible. There is another specific remedy: whenever the plague strikes, everyone while still healthy should make confession and receive the Eucharist once a week (something that many people did, in days gone by, even in healthy times). And after confession they should make the most strenuous efforts not to relapse into mortal sin, which is not so difficult with the aid of Christ's grace. This ensures that the priest is in no danger, and the others will be in safety even if sudden death or some highly contagious illness overtakes them. It will also help if we place our principal hopes of salvation in love and in the mercy of God rather than in listing our sins, especially when death looms over us.

A word on the sixth: those who forget modesty while remembering their sins are not yet truly sorry for their misdeeds. It must be drummed into them whom they have offended and how vile sin is, so that the more often they relapse into sinfulness, the more they will be ashamed. They must also be warned that confession without heartfelt contrition is profitless; but when once it has filled their mind, it will bring shame but also remove shame. It will bring shame for the vileness of their misdeeds in the sight of God; it will remove shame because shame will not conceal what is cured by being revealed.

My response to the seventh is that many more people are imperilled by overconfidence brought on by ignoring their sins, rather than by despair brought on by examining them.[201] The priest will find it more difficult to

* * * * *

200 Mark 16:18

201 Erasmus appears to have said the opposite 30 above, but as Payne (203, via Tentler 'The problem of anxiety and preparation for death in Luther, Calvin, and Erasmus' [PhD diss, Harvard University 1961] 200 n30) points

transform people's overconfidence into fear of the Lord than to rescue them from despair. There is thus a middle path between the two: the examination of sins must be sufficiently rigorous but not excessively anxious, and if it does cause anxiety, perfect ease of conscience will follow and counterbalance it when charity begins to drive out fear.[202] For fear without hope and charity produces despair.

I have already amply demonstrated the remedy for the eighth disadvantage. As for the ninth: I admit that, of the two evils, the lesser is to abstain from the Eucharist if your thoughts are fastened upon some criminal act, provided that you have struggled with all your might against the feeling but cannot dislodge it. Otherwise, to give up the sacraments completely is a step towards paganism. The case of confession is not the same. It appears that people cannot be entirely impenitent if they approach a priest with the intention not to deceive and mock him, but partly to obey the church and partly to find a better way to hate their sins, which they are still unable on their own to hate as they should. There is some sort of penitence in being upset with oneself because one does not sufficiently repent one's crimes. And it often happens that someone who goes to the priest barely penitent at all will discover during confession a genuine hatred for his crimes. This recital of disadvantages is not therefore intended to put us off confession, but to help us derive the maximum benefit from confession.

I have thought it right, best of prelates, to offer some advice that goes beyond the traditions of the early Fathers concerning confession,[203] in order that it should bear us as much fruit as possible. If people think that some danger attaches to my advice, let them reflect on how much more dangerous it is to go round with a guilty conscience; if it seems difficult, let them reflect on the peace of mind that bitter medicine can bring. They must be all the more wary of relapsing and having to swallow the same bitter pill over and over again. But let them confess just once in such a way that they will never need to confess in the future, and let it suffice to be humiliated just

* * * * *

out, Erasmus seems to imply here that more people actually suffer from overconfidence, though despair is the more dangerous of the two states.

202 Cf 1 John 4:18. Erasmus had already quoted this in reply to the Spanish monks in 1528; see *Apologia adversus monachos* LB IX 1063E.

203 Erasmus had set out the opinions of the early Fathers, from Chrysostom to Ambrose, in his *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* (CWE 72 370–7), arguing that they considered confession a personal matter in which Christ acted as intercessor and in which the sinner voluntarily withdrew from the fellowship of the church.

once before a man. Those who have once conceived a deep and heartfelt hatred for all their sins will not easily relapse into sin. God will assist a holy purpose, so long as we give him thanks for whatever befalls, and, while relying on his protection and not our own powers, try every day to improve ourselves until we reach the completeness of our humanity as measured by the full stature of Jesus Christ.[204]

* * * * *

204 Eph 4:13

This page intentionally left blank

THE EVANGELICAL PREACHER
BOOK ONE

Ecclesiastes sive de ratione concionandi

translated by
JAMES L.P. BUTRICA

annotated by
FREDERICK J. MCGINNESS

In May of 1535, with civic peace restored in reformation Basel, Erasmus moved from Freiburg im Breisgau to his beloved city on the upper Rhein after a five-year absence to oversee the publication of Origen's *Opera* and his own long-awaited treatise on preaching, *Ecclesiastes sive de ratione concionandi*. [1] He would not live to see Origen's works come to light, but over the summer of that year he concluded the penultimate and the longest treatise of his career, *Ecclesiastes*, a 'massive work' (*vastum opus*)[2] that would crown the many achievements of his life.[3] The work would set forth a ground-breaking approach for instructing preachers in Christian eloquence that would draw upon Sacred Scripture, the writings of the Fathers of the church, the works of the best classical authors, and many of his own texts. His treatise would have a decisive impact on the course of sacred oratory for years to come and cross-confessional divisions. Next to St Augustine's *On Christian Teaching* (*De doctrina christiana*) the work would stand as a milestone in the history of Christian homiletics.

Ecclesiastes, which comprises over 333 folio columns in the Leclerc edition (LB) of his Erasmus *Opera omnia* and two full volumes of the North Holland (ASD) edition, virtually recapitulates the entirety of the man's career.[4] Nearly every page of the work teems with allusions to his earlier writings,[5]

* * * * *

All classical references are to the Oxford Classical Text series.

1 On Erasmus' return to Basel, see Thompson 'Return'; Schoeck (2) 350–61; and Reedijk 33–45. Reedijk (44) puts him there on 27 May 1535, or very shortly before this date. Based on Allen Ep 3028 (Basel, 28 June 1535), Schoeck (2) says he 'arrived in Basel no later than 28 June' (359 n1). Reedijk's article offers an insightful interpretation of the data for Erasmus' additional reasons for returning to Basel at this time.

2 See Erasmus' dedicatory letter to Christoph von Stadion, 6 August 1535, 242–6 below.

3 Erasmus' final work is his exposition of Psalm 14 *De puritate tabernaculi* CWE 65 217–67, which he dedicated to Christoph Eschenfelder (dated 27 January 1536). See Allen Epp 3086 and 3081.

4 LB (1703–6 [7]). For studies on *Ecclesiastes*, see: Chomarat 'Introduction' and his *Grammaire* II 1053–5; Robert G. Kleinhans 'Ecclesiastes sive de Ratione Concionandi' in *Essays on the Works of Erasmus* ed Richard L. DeMolen (New Haven and London 1978) 253–66; Michael Grünwald 'Der "Ecclesiastes" des Erasmus von Rotterdam: Reform der Predigt durch Erneuerung des Predigers' (Diss. University of Innsbruck 1969); O'Malley 'Sacred Rhetoric'; James Michael Weiss '*Ecclesiastes* and Erasmus: The Mirror and the Image' *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 65 (1974) 83–108; Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 39–60; Béné *Érasme* 365–425; Judith T. Wozniak *A Time for Peace: The 'Ecclesiastes' of Erasmus* (New Orleans 1966); McGinness 'Erasmian Legacy.'

5 For intertextuality and 'intertextual play' in Erasmus and some difficulties

with pedagogical, scriptural, patristic, and classical references, and with his customary criticisms, all the while imparting reverence for the church, urging consensus, concord, harmony, peace and tranquillity, and offering his and later generations the best instruction on sound preaching he could devise. Though much more might have been included for the benefit of readers, such as a table of contents, subdivisions, and a clearer statement of the treatise's overall structure,[6] *Ecclesiastes* nonetheless was the product of mature reflection, published nearly sixteen years after he first conceived of the project, and just after 'the heavy loss' of two dear friends, Thomas More and John Fisher.[7]

In his dedicatory letter to Christoph von Stadion, bishop of Augsburg, Erasmus underscores the importance of *Ecclesiastes* for training 'men to spread the word of God sincerely, fervently, and faithfully.'[8] Though he regards the work as not living up to his own standards, the result nonetheless is a masterly achievement of pastoral utility and theological learning for instructing future preachers[9] in the most important of the church's ministries; as he declares at the very start, 'Many and varied are the gifts which divine goodness, in its eagerness for our salvation, has provided to the human race to obtain eternal life; but none among these is more splendid or more effective than to dispense the Lord's own word to his flock, and there is no other office in the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy either more outstanding in worth or more difficult to perform or more fruitful in application than to act as a herald of the divine will to the people and as a steward

* * * * *

identifying 'the sources of numerous quotations, proverbs, and motifs,' see Ari Wesseling 'Twentieth Annual Roland H. Bainton Presidential Lecture: Intertextual Play: Erasmus' Use of Adages in the Colloquies' ERSY 28 (2008) 1–28; see especially Richard J. Schoeck '"In loco intertexantur." Erasmus as Master of Intertextuality' in *Intertextuality* ed Heinrich F. Plett (Berlin and New York 1991) 181–91, who observes that 'Erasmus was . . . the most intertextual of prose writers and perhaps also of poets, certainly of the Renaissance'; Schoeck calls attention 'to intertextuality within certain selected adages and between adages and his other writings' (182).

6 See O'Malley 'Sacred Rhetoric' 18.

7 Dedicatory letter to Christoph von Stadion, 6 August 1535, 244 below

8 Dedicatory letter to Christoph von Stadion, 6 August 1535, 245–6 below. Christoph von Stadion, bishop of Augsburg (1478–1543), CEBR III 274–6. Erasmus also dedicated to him the Froben five-volume edition of the works of John Chrysostom *Opera* (Basel: Froben 1530); see Allen Ep 2359.

9 As in *Ratio* Erasmus refers to the future preacher as *adolescens*, a young man training to preach (*adolescens concioni destinatus*); see eg *Ratio* 187.

of the heavenly philosophy.'[10] Throughout this treatise Erasmus will stress the signal importance of the preacher for the life of the church and for carrying on Christ's mission of teaching the heavenly philosophy, for on this depends the salvation of humankind.

Ecclesiastes draws upon Erasmus' life's work of pedagogy, biblical, patristic, and classical scholarship, philology, grammar, and rhetoric, devotional writing – the sum of his life's enterprise in *bonae litterae* and *sacrae litterae.* And it draws especially on Erasmus' humanistic, theological method of investigating the sources (*fontes*) of Christian godliness (*pietas*) for appropriating and teaching the philosophy of Christ.[11] Rightly does Charles Béné call *Ecclesiastes* Erasmus' *grand testament* and the principal work of his final years: 'Nothing expresses like the *Ecclesiastes* the sum of a teaching that never ceased to develop during an entire life of study and dedication to culture in service of Christianity.'[12] Johann Huizinga sees it as 'the great work, which more than any other represented for him the summing up and complete exposition of his moral-theological ideas.'[13] Emile Telle observes it is 'probably his most finished production and intellectual testament . . . which crowned his life, his literary, philosophical, and theological

* * * * *

10 See 252–3. On the place of philosophy in the education of the free-born child see also Plutarch *De liberis educandis* 7D: 'It is necessary to make philosophy the foremost matter of all education.'

11 In this translation of Erasmus' work on preaching, the translators often employ the word 'godliness,' used by the DV (Isa 11:2–3) to render Erasmus' *pietas*. In this introduction both 'godliness' and *pietas* are used interchangeably. For a discussion of recent scholarship on *pietas* in Erasmus see John W. O'Malley's introduction to Erasmus' *Spiritualia* CWE 66 ix–li, especially xv–xxx; see also his 'Grammar'; and Tracy (1) 104–15. For studies on the philosophy of Christ, see Chantraine 334–62; Augustijn *Erasmus* 71–88; Schoeck (2) 28–40.

12 Béné *Érasme* 372: 'On peut dire que l'*Ecclesiastes* a été son "grand testament."' Béné *Érasme* 373: 'Aucune n'exprime comme l'*Ecclesiastes* la somme d'un enseignement qui n'a cessé de se développer pendant toute une vie studieuse et dévouée à la culture au service du christianisme.' See also Grünwald 67: 'Das letzte und umfangreichste Werk ist so der Schlussstein in diesem Ganzen.'

13 Johann Huizinga *Erasmus and the Age of Reformation* repr (New York 1957) 181. Later he states that '*Ecclesiastes* is the work of a mind fatigued, which no longer sharply reacts upon the needs of his time' (182). Other scholars make this point; see eg Weiss '*Ecclesiastes* and Erasmus' 90: 'Hence Erasmus' difficulty in writing *Ecclesiastes*: a treatise on Christian eloquence necessarily called for a recapitulation of the aim, the method, and the achievement of his life's work.' See also 106–7, where he aptly calls the work 'a summary and a retrospective of Erasmus' entire career' (107). Grünwald notes it is 'die letzte seiner großen Schriften, ja sein umfangreichstes Werk überhaupt' (1).

output.'[14] As for its significance in homiletic tradition, John O'Malley hails it 'the great watershed in the history of sacred rhetoric.'[15]

Although a monumental work in so many ways, *Ecclesiastes* registers Erasmus' lament for the passing of a grand moment in his life that had promised positive change in the theological culture of Europe and bright prospects for a morally better world. Twenty years before its publication, before the turmoil of the Reformation and his involvement in theological *quaestiones disputatae*, Erasmus looked optimistically to genuine reform in church and society based upon his programme of education in *bonae litterae* and *sacrae litterae*.[16] It was an age when 'the minds of princes' seemed truly bent upon 'the pursuit of peace and concord under the leadership above all of Leo, pontiff supreme in more than name . . .,'[17] and when enthusiasm for returning to the sources of Christian godliness energized a generation of capable biblical humanists to pursue Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and other oriental languages. It was an age when it seemed progress was being made daily with more accurate editions of the classical and Christian authors as neglected and once inaccessible works of antiquity came to light and passed into the hands of clergy and laity alike, eager for intellectual nourishment, social and ecclesiastical renewal.[18] By 1535, however, sensing his scholarly energies nearly spent, he would look back dispondently on his unrealized ambition of emending and editing the texts of the ancients: 'Indeed, we too, along with others, have striven with all our power in this regard; if only we had been able to accomplish all that we wanted!'[19] *Ecclesiastes* represents, as well, a lament for an era when one might criticize the foibles and

* * * * *

14 Emile V. Telle '"To every thing there is a season . . .": Ways and Fashions in the Art of Preaching on the Eve of the Religious Upheaval in the Sixteenth Century' ERSY 2 (1982) 14. Hoffmann says the same: 'the crowning culmination of his lifework' (*Rhetoric* 31).

15 O'Malley 'Sacred Rhetoric' 13; see also 14: the *Ecclesiastes* is 'one of the best informed and most profoundly learned treatises on the subject ever produced, without any doubt far surpassing anything that had preceded it or that would be published for decades to come.'

16 See Albert Rabil Jr 'Desiderius Erasmus' in Rabil 2 216–64, especially 216–18.

17 Letter to Wolfgang Capito (Antwerp, 26 February 1517), Ep 541:11–65. Erasmus sees everywhere signs that the princes of Europe are 'tearing out by the roots the nurseries of war and binding peace in chains . . .'; 'So it is to their piety that we owe the spectacle of the best minds everywhere rising . . . as they set themselves in concert to restore the humanities' (Ep 541:36–53).

18 See Erasmus' *Paraclesis* for a similar expression of optimism in Olin *Catholic Reformation* 92–106. See also Augustijn *Erasmus* 71–2.

19 See book 3 973.

pretensions of pompous prelates and theologians, when freer and more collegial discourse took place among Christian scholars,[20] which might have at last led to peace for Christian letters. Finally, it is perhaps Erasmus' lament for his own passing glory, for a time when he once saw himself acclaimed in European lands as the prince of humanists, who was sought out by rulers, statesmen, bishops, and literati for his scholarship, illustrious wit, pedagogical wisdom, urbanity, and humanistic theological learning.[21] By 1535, however, the world of Europe – and Erasmus' own world – had changed dramatically, and much for the worse.[22] His celebrated fame had lost much of its lustre among the many Reformers angered at his opposition to Luther and to other currents of the Reformation, and among many Catholics disappointed in his doubtful orthodoxy and religious allegiance.[23]

By 1535 Erasmus also suffered from the sheer burden *Ecclesiastes* had brought upon him. Wanting his customary diligence in getting works to press in timely fashion, he had taken close to sixteen years to complete *Ecclesiastes*. In his dedicatory letter to von Stadion, Erasmus describes the work as 'vast and complex,' the most agonizing work he ever undertook.[24] At the same time we might infer that in his own estimation this treatise was also the most important of his entire life; nothing greater could he offer the church

* * * * *

20 On criticism, see eg *Moria*; *Epigramma Erasmi in Julium* II in *Opuscula* 35–7. See also J.K. Sowards 'The Two Lost Years of Erasmus: Summary, Review, and Speculation' *Studies in the Renaissance* 9 (1962) 161–86, especially 178–81. On free discourse, see letter to Christopher Fisher (Paris, [about March] 1505), Ep 182:46–97.

21 See eg letter to Servatius Rogerus (Hammes castle, 8 July 1514), Ep 296:99–180. See also Tracy (1) 74–86, 121–2 and especially part III 'Second Thoughts, 1521–1536' 127–208; Augustijn *Erasmus* 31–42; Schoeck (2) 349–59, especially 352, who speaks of the events after 1517 that 'shook Erasmus' optimism'; Wolfs, and Seidel Menchi *Erasmus als Ketzer* 21–32, 33–66.

22 For Erasmus' 'weariness with the world' after his return to Basel, see Schoeck (2) 350–61; Tracy (1) 127–208; and Augustijn *Erasmus* 183. See also Alan Perreiah 'Humanist Critiques of Scholastic Dialectic' *Sixteenth Century Journal* 13 (1982) 3–22; Christian Dolfen *Die Stellung des Erasmus von Rotterdam zur scholastischen Methode* (Osnabrück 1936) 5–6.

23 See Rummel *Catholic Critics* II passim and Seidel Menchi *Erasmus als Ketzer*. See also Augustijn *Erasmus* 119–33. For Erasmus' supporters in Rome, especially Tommaso de Vio (Cajetanus), see Paul Grendler 'Italian Biblical Humanism and the Papacy, 1515–1535' in *Biblical Humanism and Scholasticism in the Age of Erasmus* ed Erika Rummel (Leiden 2008) 227–76, especially 270–3.

24 See Erasmus' dedicatory preface to Christoph von Stadion (242). Allen III 631–2 notes: 'As to when he began to write the *Ecclesiastes*, there is no definite evidence to show . . .'

than this much needed manual to guide future clergy in preaching Christ purely, simply, and sincerely.[25] *Ecclesiastes* would serve as a crucial resource for clergy when, Erasmus believed, good preaching by bishops and secular and regular clergy was in woefully short supply. Arguably, few were better capable of composing such a work than himself; certainly many contemporaries believed this, as his correspondence makes clear. His sentiment proved accurate: his final *opus* would justly count among the most influential of all his works; paradoxically, it would be among those least acknowledged by its readership.[26] Catholic quarters would not grant it a long public life. In 1559, with Pope Paul IV's Index of Forbidden Books (*Index librorum prohibitorum*), the public sale and circulation of Erasmus' *opera* in Catholic lands ceased.[27] This did not mean, however, that *Ecclesiastes'* use and influence ended.

Why Erasmus decided to compose *Ecclesiastes* is not altogether clear, nor is it easy to identify with precision the range of reasons for its composition and all the persons with whom some type of agreement was made to undertake it. The best account of the work's genesis and development is given in Erasmus' dedicatory letter to von Stadion. If we accept his words at face value, it started with a promise, though one given perhaps more in jest: 'Several years ago I promised a work on preaching. To tell the truth, I was not serious, and did not really mean it.'[28] But afterwards, urged by people to carry out what he 'had not seriously promised' and in response to these mounting pressures, Erasmus composed notes and ideas, hoping he might later 'find the will and the opportunity to tackle the subject.' Years passed, however, and with them his loathing grew ever greater at the prospect of undertaking such an ambitious project demanding so much labour.[29] Often he broke off his work, only to return to it, and each time he renewed his commitment to the project, he felt racked with deeper anguish. Through all

* * * * *

25 See eg letter to Jan Becker of Borsele (Louvain, 24 April 1519), Ep 952:51–2.

26 See McGinness 'Erasmian Legacy.'

27 See Paul F. Grendler *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540–1605* (Princeton 1977) 117, 146. See also Seidel Menchi *Erasmus als Ketzer* for the characterization of Erasmus in Italy as wholly abhorrent: 'Der Erasmus, auf den man im Italien des Cinquecento traf, war ein verwerflicher Ketzer, ein Unruhe- und Unheilstifter' (6).

28 Letter to Christoph von Stadion, preface (242). For the history of the composition of *Ecclesiastes*, see especially Kleinhans 7–28.

29 Letter to Christoph von Stadion, preface (242); Erasmus' words about his difficulties in producing this work echo Quintilian's words to his friend Trypho in the *prohoemium* to book 1 of *Institutio oratoria* (1–23).

this Erasmus complains of ill health and pressing responsibilities of various kinds; still, at the end he would reveal his satisfaction in knowing that before his death he had made good on his word to complete what had once seemed unattainable and for years bled him of health and inner peace.

Arguably the strongest push to produce this work came from John Fisher, bishop of Rochester: Erasmus tells us that 'he, more than anyone else, encouraged me by letter to take up this task ...' (Ep 3036).[30] But it is not clear how often these epistolary stimuli occurred. Erasmus however makes explicit that he 'had made no promise to him but merely turned over the possibility silently in my mind.' It is interesting to speculate what Erasmus might have told Fisher about his intentions to compose the treatise, but lacking correspondence on this exchange we shall likely never know. Whatever his words to Fisher, they might have been spoken as early as 1511–12, when Erasmus resided at Queen's College in Cambridge, but far more likely between 1512 and 1519, and probably closer to the latter date.[31] Further support for Fisher as prime mover is given in Erasmus' letter to the bishop of Basel, Christoph von Utenheim (Basel, [early January?] 1523), when he tells him, 'If Christ grants me the strength, I shall finish a book on the principles of preaching, which I promised long ago and am frequently asked for in letters from that best of prelates, John, bishop of Rochester, who appeals to our ancient friendship and his unfailing and continual support of me.'[32]

* * * * *

30 Letter to Christoph von Stadion, preface (244); see 'John Fisher' CEBR II 36–9. See also Erasmus' letter to John Fisher (Basel, 1 [September] 1522), Ep 1311: 20–2.

31 John Fisher (1469–1535) was both bishop of Rochester (1504–35) and chancellor of the University of Cambridge (1504–35). It is likely Erasmus first met him on his second visit to London in 1505–6, when he stayed at the house of Thomas More to collaborate on translating the writings of Lucian; he resumed contact with Fisher in 1509 on his visit to England, and again in 1511–14, when he lived at Queen's College, Cambridge, teaching Greek and theology at Fisher's invitation. Already in September 1511 Erasmus writes Fisher from Cambridge expressing the wish to dedicate 'some literary gift that should be worthy of your Eminence ...' (Ep 229:6), but the work would likely be some translation of the Fathers; see Schoeck (2) 109–25. According to Erasmus Fisher wrote to him often; see Ep 457 to Johann Reuchlin (Calais, 27 August [1516]). For a study of Erasmus and Fisher's relationship, see Porter 'Fisher and Erasmus,' which looks at the tensions that grew between Erasmus and Fisher after 1519.

32 Letter to Christoph von Utenheim (Basel, [early January?] 1523), Ep 1332:40–5. Erasmus' wording is somewhat ambiguous and can admit the reading that he promised such a work to John Fisher ('... librum De ratione concionandi

On 4 September 1524, Erasmus wrote Fisher, 'I had made a start on the book [*Ecclesiastes*] you ask for (and others ask for it too); but my complaint, which threatened me with the worst, and certain other interruptions obliged me to break off.'[33] Despite later apparent disagreements with Fisher,[34] Erasmus obviously retained deep admiration for the prelate whom he regarded as 'a bishop of exemplary godliness,' 'a man of incomparable holiness and learning' and 'a true bishop in all the offices worthy of a prelate but especially in his zeal for teaching the people ...'[35] Fisher's life, apostolate, and administration as permanent warden, or 'chancellor,' of the University of Cambridge in many ways served as a model for Erasmus' reflections on the excellent *ecclesiastes* 'preacher.'[36] Erasmus tells von Stadion that as 'chancellor' of Cambridge Fisher sought to establish three colleges that would produce true 'theologians' (*theologi*) who were not so much armed

* * * * *

absolvemus: quem olim a me promissum crebris litteris efflagitat optimus praesul Ioannes Roffensis episcopus ...' Allen Ep 1332:36–8). The letters of Fisher to which Erasmus refers here are presumably not extant. See Porter 'Fisher and Erasmus' 85–6 and Erasmus' letter to Johann von Botzheim (Basel, 30 January 1523), Ep 1341A:1332–8: 'I still have by me several things which I started long ago; among them is a commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Romans, of which I had finished four books, if I mistake not, twenty-two years ago. For a work on the theory of preaching I had only jotted down some divisions of the subject-matter. And yet, if Christ grants me life and tranquillity, I have a mind to finish a work on preaching, which may do some good, especially as I am urged to do so by men whose opinion carries great weight.' For the Latin text, see Allen I [I] 34:19–22: 'In Opus de ratione concionandi tantum annotaveramus quaedam rerum capita. Et tamen si Christus dabit vitam ac tranquillitatem, est animus Opus concionandi [hoc anno utrumque hoc opus] in publicam utilitatem absolvere, praesertim huc adhortantibus magnis autoribus.' Allen's edition notes the emendation Erasmus made where he deleted the words *hoc anno utrumque hoc opus*. It seems Erasmus had the intention of finishing and publishing *Ecclesiastes* as early as 1523, but he deletes these words in his revision of this letter to Botzheim, which he then published in September 1524. See Allen I [I].

33 Letter to John Fisher (Basel, 4 September 1524), Ep 1489:368–70

34 Porter 'Fisher and Erasmus' 90–6

35 See book 1 354 below; letter to Archduke Ferdinand (Basel, 29 November 1522), Ep 1323:25.

36 See book 1 352–5 for Erasmus' comment on William Warham (b 1450–22 August 1532), who held Fisher in great esteem. See also his comments on Warham in Ep 384 to Leo X (Basel, 1 February 1516). Warham became lord chancellor and archbishop of Canterbury in 1503; see CEBR III 427–31 Erasmus portrays Warham as a model bishop. See also *Peregrinatio religionis ergo* (*Colloquia*) CWE 40 669 n155.

for the battle of words (λογομαχία) as trained for the sober preaching of the word of God.'[37] Like William Warham, archbishop of Canterbury,[38] and some other notable clergy, Fisher would have recognized Erasmus' talents as an educator, one eminently qualified to compose a preaching manual for the instruction of his clergy as he envisioned for his colleges at Cambridge. It is certainly conceivable too, as Erasmus' comment to von Stadion suggests, that at some point in their friendship he acceded to a request from Fisher at least to consider composing a treatise on preaching.

On the basis of firmer textual evidence we know that Jan Becker of Borsele, Erasmus' acquaintance from Louvain, also provided a crucial stimulus. Most scholars concur it was Becker, dean of the College of Zandenburg (or Zanddijk), near Veere, who in 1518 exacted from Erasmus a promise to write a work on preaching.[39] A year later, 28 March 1519, Becker urged Erasmus once again to 'devote a few days to writing a book on the theory of preaching for those who wish to preach the Gospel,' pleading with him to 'remember that you promised me you would do it, in the winter of last year, when I was constantly, perhaps even tiresomely, at your side.'[40] In 1521,

* * * * *

37 See the dedicatory letter to Christoph von Stadion, 244 below; also the letter to Alonso de Fonseca (Freiburg, [May] 1529), Ep 2157:124–30. See 1 Tim 6:4; cf *Ratio* 303.

38 On Warham see n36 above.

39 Béné, Kleinhans, and Chomarat identify Becker as the single individual responsible for giving Erasmus the idea for this work. Kleinhans (7–28) identifies Becker as the single source of Erasmus' motivation to compose *Ecclesiastes*, though he does acknowledge the numerous requests Erasmus received from others, including Fisher, for a work on this subject. See Chomarat 'Introduction' 3 and *Grammaire* I 1053; Béné *Érasme* 373; and Grünwald 4–14. On Jan Becker see CEBR I 115–6; cf Ep 932:19–22: 'But there is one request I wish to make of you: that when you get a little time to spare from your more serious researches, you should devote a few days to writing a book on the theory of preaching for those who wish to preach the Gospel . . .' See also 43–5: 'If all this does not suffice to move you, remember that you promised me you would do it, in the winter of last year, when I was constantly, perhaps even tiresomely, at your side.' See also *Ratio* 283:34–284:2: 'Fortassis et a nobis nonnihil conferetur, si quando vacabit absolvere libellum olim coeptum de theologicis allegoriis.' Grünwald (4) finds a possible reference to Erasmus' start on *Ecclesiastes*: 'Die erste literarische Nachricht über den Ecclesiastes ist wahrscheinlich jene Notiz in der Ausgabe der Ratio seu Methodus aus dem Jahr 1518 . . .'

40 Letter from Jan Becker of Borsele (Veere, 28 March 1519), Ep 932:25–38: 'It remains for you to lay down the right principles for a preacher of the Gospel, which will in fact be a benefit to a far larger public, not only to those who have

Erasmus moved to Basel to be close to the Froben press (where he would reside until 1529),[41] and in the following year Becker wrote Erasmus again, politely and less assertively, nudging him to apply himself to the task which he had promised three years previously.[42] Still the promise made to Becker may well have been merely a repetition of the same words given earlier to Fisher, and perhaps to others as well. Whatever the origin of such a promise, we find Erasmus jotting down some key ideas that would later appear in *Ecclesiastes* when he writes to Justus Jonas in the latter half of May 1519, though without signaling his intention of writing a work on preaching.[43] Only in January 1523, in his famous letter to Johann von Botzheim giving an expanded catalogue of his works for an eventual publication of his *opera omnia*, does Erasmus state his intention to compose *Ecclesiastes*: 'For a work on the theory of preaching I had only jotted down some divisions of the subject matter. And yet, if Christ grants me life and tranquillity, I have a mind to finish a work on preaching, which may do some good, especially as I am urged to do so by men whose opinion carries great weight.'[44] About the same time Erasmus writes to Christoph of Utenheim, bishop of Basel, stating the same.[45] Later, in September 1524 – at least four years after his 'promise' – Erasmus tells Fisher he has 'made a start on the book,' indicating the work was underway.[46]

* * * * *

imbibed your instruction and thereafter will preach better and with better results, but also to the public who in this way will listen to preachers more effectively and with much greater profit. Such a thing will be the greatest joy to me on behalf of us all and privately for my own use. Not long ago I was enrolled, as you know, among the shepherds of the Lord's flock, and what food can I find for my Lord's flock committed to my charge more nourishing and better for them than that provided by evangelists and apostles, if only I had been trained under your guidance and knew how to feed it to them with wisdom and skill? Say yes, I beg you, for two reasons: the very great and widespread benefits that will accrue and your own passionate devotion to the religion of Christ.'

41 For his reasons to reside permanently in Basel after November 1521 (to April 1529), see Halkin 160–1; Tracy (1) 128–9; Augustijn *Erasmus* 126 and his 'Reformation' 30–4.

42 Jan Becker to Erasmus (Louvain, 23 November 1522), Ep 1321:11–14: 'But I would not now dare to demand the book on the theory of preaching that you promised three years ago, since I see you beset on all sides by so many and such bitter diatribes and critical comments . . .'

43 Ep 967A to Justus Jonas, Antwerp, [c 20–6 May?] 1519

44 Letter to Johann von Botzheim (Basel, 30 January 1523), Ep 1341A:1334–8

45 Letter to Christoph von Utenheim (Basel, [early January?] 1523), Ep 1332:40–5; see 84 above.

46 Letter to John Fisher (Basel, 4 September 1524), Ep 1489:44

Despite Erasmus' natural aptitude and capacity for such a work, *Ecclesiastes* was anything but easy for him to compose.[47] He confesses anguish, loathing, and near despair over the seemingly endless years of *Ecclesiastes'* composition. In fact, for a long while the promised work remained little more than a velleity. Erasmus had other weighty problems such as the affair with Luther, which seems to have kept him perpetually 'swamped with work'[48] and drained of energy; he was urged by Lutheran, other reform-minded individuals, and papal adherents to state publicly his theological positions one way or the other, which at last he did only in 1524 with his *De libero arbitrio*. Nonetheless, *Ecclesiastes* seems still to have weighed much on his mind. In 1525, when concluding *Lingua*, he mentions again he is about to undertake the work: 'The progress of our speech has brought us to the tongue of angels, which is that of priests and bishops. We will investigate the nature of this gift of God in the books on the method of preaching, which we are now beginning . . .'[49] But then there were the numerous other works he was preparing during these years[50] as well as revisions of other works such as the *Novum Testamentum*, *Colloquia*, *De copia*, works on the Psalms, let alone his ongoing correspondence with individuals all over Europe and his changes of residence.[51] In these years too, as Erasmus found himself slowly losing his health, suffering numerous infirmities, and tormented by the sense 'his enemies were spying on him

* * * * *

47 Besides Erasmus' own statements on why it took so long for him to complete this work, especially those in his dedicatory letter to von Stadion, see Chomarat *Grammaire* II 1053–9.

48 Letter to Simon Pistoris (Basel, [c 2 September] 1526), Ep 1744:5–6

49 CWE 29 412 ('tongue of angels' [1 Cor 13:1])

50 *Exomologesis*, *Hyperaspistes* 1 & 2, *De civilitate*, *Institutio christiani matrimonii*, the Commentary on Origen, *Ciceronianus*, *Dialogus de recta latini graecique sermonis pronuntiatione*, *Paraphrasis in Elegantias Vallae*, *De pueris instituendis*, *De vidua christiana*, *De bello Turcico*, *Apophthegmata*, *Explanatio symboli*, *De concordia*, *De praeparatione*, *Precationes*, a revision of Jerome's *Opera*, the editions of Irenaeus', Ambrose's, Augustine's (Basel: Froben 1529), Chrysostom's, Basil's, and Origen's (Basel: Froben 1536, published posthumously) *opera*, and expositions of the Psalms, including *De puritate tabernaculi* (his last published work).

51 Letter to Paolo Bombace (23 September 1521), Ep 1236:124–6: 'I am entirely engrossed in revising the New Testament [third edition] and some other works of mine, slowly licking into shape the crude offspring of my brains like a she-bear.' For this image of the she-bear, see *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 305. For a complete list of Erasmus' works, especially those produced while he was at work on *Ecclesiastes*, see Allen XII 30–4. See also Reedijk 46.

everywhere,'[52] he became embroiled in controversies with Edward Lee, Noël Béda, Pierre Cousturier, Frans Titelmans, Jacques Masson (Jacobus Latomus) and the theologians of Louvain, the Parisian theologians over his *Paraphrases in Novum Testamentum* and *Colloquia*, with Diego López Zúñiga and Alberto Pio, prince of Carpi, to name but a few.[53] Scattered references to the progress, and lack thereof, as well as to his intention to complete *Ecclesiastes* appear on occasion in Erasmus' correspondence between 1524 and 1535 as he bemoans his sporadic, desultory work and the rising pressure from a growing number of friends and followers urging him to complete it.[54] In late June 1531, he confides to Tielmannus Gravius, 'in my present circumstances there is neither time to complete *The Preacher* [*Concionator*] nor the willingness, nor is it expedient in this insane world.'[55] Add to this, as Jacques Chomarat and Robert Kleinhans opine, the fact that Erasmus may have had strong personal difficulties throwing himself into a work on preaching for which he would be criticized because he had not

* * * * *

52 Augustijn *Erasmus* 154; Reedijk 40

53 For these disputes, including those with Dominicans, Franciscans, and Carmelites, see Rummel *Catholic Critics*; for his troubles with the Dominicans at Louvain, see Wolfs; Marcel Gielis 'Leuven Theologians as Opponents of Erasmus and of Humanistic Theology' in *Biblical Humanism* 197–214; and Paolo Sartori 'Frans Titelmans, The Congregation of Montaigu, and Biblical Scholarship' in *Biblical Humanism* 215–23. See especially CWE 84 for his dispute with Alberto Pio, Prince of Carpi.

54 See eg Ep 1489 to John Fisher, Basel, 4 September 1524; and letter to Noël Béda (Basel, 15 June 1525), Ep 1581:742–3: 'John, bishop of Rochester, has been pressing me repeatedly for a work on preaching, threatening me, begging, and almost compelling me to comply.' In 1527, Becker writes Erasmus yet again, politely nudging him: 'I hope you will treat it more seriously than you treated the advice I gave you eight years ago, that you should write on the theory of preaching' (Ep 1787:43–5). See also the closing words of Erasmus' *Apologia adversus Petrum Sutorem*: 'Iam enim accingebar ad libros, olim a me promissos, et a multis flagitatos, de ratione concionandi, ni latrator iste de improviso prosilisset' (LB IX 804E, quoted by Kleinhans 18); his letter to Thomas More, Ep 1804:149–50: '. . . completing the long-awaited *On the Art of Preaching*'; letter to Henri de Bottis (Basel, 22 December 1527), Ep 1921:16–19: '*De ratione concionandi* has not been published yet; something always comes up to thwart our purpose and direct our attention elsewhere. And you can hardly imagine how much trouble the Augustine is giving.' See also his letter to Louis Ber (Freiburg, 22 October 1529), Allen Ep 2225:22–4: 'Aggredi cepi libros De ratione concionandi, sed animus semel elapsus e vinculis, veluti Proteus quispiam in omnia se vertit, ne rursus capiatur. Expugnabo tamen.'

55 (Freiburg, [?June fin. 1531]) Allen Ep 2508:6–8

preached since his days at the Collège de Montaigu.[56] And then there were the continuous reports of the deaths of so many good friends.[57] Whatever Erasmus' personal reasons for the untypical delay in bringing this work to production we can only speculate; yet it should be emphasized that during the years of *Ecclesiastes'* composition Erasmus was anything but inactive.[58]

It is only in August 1534 that we learn from Erasmus of his completion of book 1 and of his hopes to have the entire work finished by the end of the following autumn at the latest.[59] He tells us too that he contemplated having the treatise consist of three books (not four). Finally, in his letter of 7 May 1535 to Julius Pflug, just before his return from Freiburg im Breisgau to Basel to oversee the printing, we learn of his treatise's imminent completion,

* * * * *

56 See the letter to Jan (II) Łaski (Basel, 27 August 1528), Ep 2033:49–52: 'This winter, if the Lord grants me some free time, I will prepare my notes for the *De concionando*, and already magpies and jackdaws are squawking about it. "What?" they say, "Is he going to teach us how to preach when he has never preached in his life?"' Craig Thompson gives evidence that Erasmus preached at the Collège de Montaigu ('Better Teachers' 131); see eg the letter of Beatus Rhenanus to Charles V (Schlettstadt, 1 June 1540), Allen I 58:65–7 ('Ergo Scotista factus est, in collegio Montis agens; nam inter theologos disputatores Ioannes ille Dunsius Scotus ab acumine ingenii maxime praedicatur'); and, more important, Erasmus' letter to Johann von Botzheim (Basel, 30 January 1523), Ep 1341A:351: 'Very many things have fallen by the way which I do not regret; but I could wish that some speeches in sermon form still survived which I delivered long ago in Paris, when I was living in the Collège de Montaigu.' Erasmus did discourse publicly on at least one other occasion; see Erasmus' *Panegyricus* CWE 27 8–75, which he delivered on 6 January 1504 at Brussels. On Erasmus' desultory progress on *Ecclesiastes*, see Chomarat *Grammaire* II 1056–7; Béné *Érasme* 32–7; Halkin 'La pieté d'Erasme' *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 79 (1984) 675: 'Il est alors pensionnaire du Collège de Montaigu et il y prononce quelques sermons' (See his footnote). See also Grünwald 12–4 (*Die Psychologie der Entstehung*).

57 See Halkin 257–8.

58 Erasmus took sixteen years to complete his edition of Jerome's works (1500–16), during which time he was also extremely active; see introduction, CWE 61 xvii.

59 Letter to Justus Decius (Freiburg, 22 August 1534), Allen Ep 2961:25–31: 'Est iam pridem in manibus Ecclesiastes, sed nescio quo pacto non favet genius. Tocies in manus recepi, toties deposui invita propemodum Minerva. Primum librum absolvi, secundum ac tertium orsus sum, nam tribus absolvere statui.Primus liber est plusquam iuste magnitudinis, metuo ne posteriores sint longiores. Si Deus dederit vitam et valetudinem mediocrem, hoc exibit autumno proximo ad summum.'

though not to his personal satisfaction.[60] Aware that his years were drawing quickly and painfully to a close, he tells Pflug he preferred to commit the work to his publisher if only in unpolished form than to have it finished by others after his death: 'I have handed over my *Ecclesiastes* to the printers. It is organized in four books, though it is still somewhat rough, lacking the final polish. But people were calling for the work, and when I thought about the weakness of my poor body, I preferred to send it out half-finished rather than allow it to make its appearance in the world as a posthumous child, for I know only too well how unscrupulously the works of dead authors are treated.'[61] Finally, on 24 August 1535, Erasmus writes to Bartholomaeus Latomus that his work is on its way.[62]

In late August 1535 (between 24–31 August),[63] Erasmus put the final touches to *Ecclesiastes*, and on 1 September, in collaboration with Hieronymus Froben and Nicolaus Episcopius, he oversaw publication of the *editio princeps* in folio (Edition A) at the Froben press. By October he had sent out the first copies to his friends Piotr Tomicki, bishop of Cracow, Paul Volz, Damião de Gois, Léonard of Gruyères,[64] archdeacon of Salins, and perhaps others. And as some 2600 copies of the treatise were being printed and sold,[65] Erasmus, Hieronymus Froben, and Nicolaus Episcopius were

* * * * *

60 Letter to Piotr Tomicki, Allen Ep 3049:67–8, especially 219: 'Tum erat excudendus Ecclesiastes, qui multis locis hiulcus et inchoatus vix potuisset absolvi, nisi praesens adfuissem.' See also Rhenanus 51; for Pflug see CEBR III 77–8 and letter to Julius Pflug (7 May 1535), Allen Ep 3016:25–30. For Erasmus' final years in Basel, see Thompson 'Return'; Schoeck (2) 350–61; and Reedijk.

61 Letter to Julius Pflug (7 May 1535), Allen Ep 3016:25–30

62 Letter to Bartholomaeus Latomus (Basel, 24 August 1535), Allen Ep 3048:75: 'Prodit Concionator meus, utinam bonis avibus.' For Bartholomaeus Latomus see CEBR I 303–4.

63 Letter to Leonhard von Eck (Basel, 5 August 1535), Allen Ep 3035:14–16: 'Ecclesiastes meus iam erat absolutus, nisi valetudo coegisset feriari praelum: at vel inabsolutus prodibit ad Calendas Septembris.'

64 Letter to Piotr Tomicki (Basel, 31 August 1535), Allen Ep 3049:187–9: 'Ecclesiastae volumen lubens ad te mississem, si quis voluisset sarcinam recipere; per negociatores isthuc perferetur.' Letter from Paul Volz (Strasbourg, 4 November 1535), Allen Ep 3069:1: 'S.P.D. Epistolium tuum, D. Erasme dilectissime, cum Ecclesiaste abs te mihi donato exultabundus accoepi.' Letter from Damião de Gois (Padua, 22 December 1535), Allen Ep 3078:36: 'Concionator tuus apud nos iam extat, opus dignum te, in quo non temere tam diu laborasti.' Letter to Léonard of Gruyères (Basel, 12 October 1535), Allen Ep 3063:11–12: 'Commitam opus Ecclesiastae Gilberto Cognato, amanuensi meo, si possit ferre onus.'

65 See letter to Damião de Gois (Basel, 15 December 1535), Allen Ep 3076:7–9: 'Ecclesiastes iam opinor isthic prostat. Excusa sunt duo milia voluminum et

engaged in preparing a second edition in octavo, which appeared in March 1536 (Edition B). This Erasmus edited with a few minor changes.[66] In August 1536, a month after Erasmus' death (11 July 1536), Froben and Episcopius published a third edition in octavo (Edition C), and in 1540 yet another one (Edition D), which is included in tome V of Erasmus' complete works published at Basel.[67] In the years following the first edition of *Ecclesiastes* many pirated editions ensued as well.[68]

Erasmus at first intended to dedicate *Ecclesiastes* to John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, but on 26 August 1535, having just completed it and days before its publication,[69] he received the painful report confirming the execution of Fisher (22 June 1535) and More (6 July 1535). He then dedicated the work to Christoph von Stadion, backdating his letter to 6 August 1535.[70] In this letter Erasmus describes the continuous physical and mental agonies he endured in bringing the work to completion, and he sketches a brief out-

* * * * *

sexcenta. Nunc denuo excusus est minore forma.' See also Allen's notes on the printing of *Ecclesiastes* in Allen XI 189–90.

66 See Chomarat 'Introduction' 22–7.

67 See the editions of *Ecclesiastes* that appear in Erasmus' collected works: *Opera omnia* (Basel: Hieronymus Froben 1538–41); LB V 769–1100; ASD V-4, V-5. Kleinhans gives a thorough history of the editions of *Ecclesiastes*; see 28–35, Appendix A 'Latin Editions of *Ecclesiastes*' (163–4), and Appendix B 'The First Froben Editions of *Ecclesiastes*' (165–7). See also Lawrence D. Green and James J. Murphy *Renaissance Rhetoric: Short-Title Catalogue 1460–1700* 2nd ed (Ashgate 2006) 190.

68 For a study of the printing history of the *Ecclesiastes*, see Kleinhans 31–5. Kleinhans lists the reprinted and pirated versions of *Ecclesiastes* (Antwerp: Martinus Caesar 1535; Antwerp: Michael Hillenius 1535; Basel: Froben, March 1536 and August 1536; Antwerp: G. Montanus 1539; Basel: Froben 1539; Basel: Froben 1540 [*Opera omnia* V 643–917]; Leiden: Sebastian Gryphius 1543; Basel: Froben 1544–5, 1554). See especially Allen's note for Ep 3036.

69 Letter to Bartholomaeus Latomus (Basel, 24 August 1535), Allen Ep 3048:53, where Erasmus speaks of the rumour that Fisher had been executed: 'Hic constans et verisimilis rumor est, ubi Rex cognovit Episcopum Roffensem a Paulo tertio cooptatum in numerum Cardinalium, eo maturius productum e carcere truncasse capite. Sic ille dedit rubrum galerum. Thomam Morum iam pridem esse in carcere, facultatibus in regium fiscum redactis, nimis verum est. Ferebatur et is ultimo affectus supplicio, sed nondum certum habeo'; and Letter to Piotr Tomicki (Basel, 31 August 1535) Allen Ep 3049:160–2: 'In Anglia quid acciderit episcopo Roffensi, ac Thomae Moro, quo hominum iugo nunquam habuit Anglia quicquam sanctius aut melius . . .'

70 See Kleinhans 23, who notes that Erasmus was also urged to dedicate this work to John III, duke of Cleves and Juliers.

line of *Ecclesiastes'* four books and explains his method of instructing the preacher.[71] The terse outline which Erasmus refers to as 'a rough sketch' does little to capture the substantial content and weighty significance of his work, let alone help to clarify its many organizational problems.

In his dedicatory letter to von Stadion Erasmus tells the bishop why he did not emend the *editio princeps* before its publication: 'To be quite frank, I could not face going over such a massive work again, for it was only with difficulty that I accomplished this much with my health growing weaker every day.'[72] The treatise's need for emendation, however, is evident in more than a few places. James Butrica notes that many parts of the work lack Erasmus' customary polish and care, and were obviously written in haste or in physical and emotional distress. Erasmus himself hints now and then that he had not thought through where all the parts of *Ecclesiastes* should go; he confesses to leaving 'gaps, repetitions, arguments that are incomplete or out

* * * * *

71 Von Stadion replied to Erasmus (Allen Ep 3073, Dilligen, 27 November 1535) with gratitude for the dedication of *Ecclesiastes* to him and concurred with the sentiments Erasmus expressed throughout *Ecclesiastes* about the need for good preachers and the timely importance of Erasmus' treatise: 'What could have been more spiritually wholesome for this age, more useful for teaching – indeed, more necessary? In my judgment there is nothing else to blame for such lukewarm faith among the common people than the shortage of good preachers.' Von Stadion also deplored Henry VIII's execution of John Fisher and Thomas More, and he sent Erasmus seventy crowns (*coronati*) and Gilbertus Cognatus (Gilbert Cousin), his amanuensis, ten. John Munro believes the money referred to could be either the French coin (the *écu au soleil à la couronne*) or the English coin, the crown, from which it was copied, from August 1526 (slightly revised in November 1526); the latter, known as the double-rose crown ('the crown of the rose'), was worth 5s (or 60d) and retained that value from November 1526 to 1542. If we take the wage of a master mason of Cambridge or Oxford in 1535 at 6d, the sum of 70 crowns (or 4200d) would have been equivalent to 700 days' wages; and with about 210 paid working days per year, that would mean 3.33 years' money wage income for said mason. Erasmus' choice of von Stadion for his dedication was indeed financially astute. For more information on these coins, see John H. Munro's Appendix E, 'Money and Coinage of the Age of Erasmus' CWE 1 311–47; 'Money, Wages, and Real Incomes in the Age of Erasmus: The Purchasing Power of Coins and of Building Craftsmen's Wages in England and the Southern Low Countries, 1500–1540' CWE 12 (appendix 551–699); and 'The Coinages and Monetary Policies of Henry VIII (r. 1509–47)' CWE 14 423–76, especially 440–50 and 476. See also 'Gilbert Cousin' CEBR I 350–2. My thanks to the late John Munro for his generous assistance with this footnote.

72 See 242–6 (dedicatory letter to Christoph von Stadion).

of place.'[73] In book 3, for example, when discussing the rhetorical device of similitude, he says, 'I forego an accumulation of examples, especially since we are giving the advice in this less pertinent place because it did not occur to me earlier.'[74] His decision not to revise and polish parts of the work is noteworthy, as is his admission of impatience with revision and correction. In a note to the reader (Basel, end of August 1535) he declares his reasons for the less-than-polished state of the text: 'Almost all the errors in this work must be attributed either to my amanuensis or myself. It is true that I was present during the printing, but because of my poor health I was unable to make a final revision, especially since the need to correct certain pages often coincided with the hours that had to be devoted to sleep or to the care of my poor body.' His words suggest how agonizingly close to death Erasmus felt by late August 1535, how greatly this work weighed upon him, and how determined he was to see it published in his lifetime.[75]

From its numerous editions and printings we can assume the work was as popular as it was timely and its reception and impact on preaching in both Roman Catholic and Protestant circles considerable. Robert Kleinhans sees the popularity of the work as lasting well into the decade after the appearance of the *editio princeps*. It was obviously read by many of Erasmus' close admirers,[76] and no doubt attracted the attention of numerous

* * * * *

73 See 243 (dedicatory letter to Christoph von Stadion); cf O'Malley 'Sacred Rhetoric' 18.

74 See book 3 CWE 68 879; see also Butrica 'Translator's Note' 239–40 above, and Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 39 for comments on the organizational problems with *Ecclesiastes*: 'The text is not readily analysable . . .'; see also Grünwald 2: 'Der Grund liegt im Ecclesiastes selbst, in seiner auffallend wirren Textlage. Das legte nahe, allem voraus nach der Geschichte und den persönlichen Umständen der Entstehung des Werkes zu fragen. Dabei stellte sich bereits der Character des Werkes als einer einigermaßen geordneten "sylva" d.h. Stoffsammlung heraus.' See also Grünwald 26–30 for the highly problematic nature of the work's organization.But see Chomarat's 'Introduction' 7–16, especially 7: 'Malgré ces flottements et ces néglences le plan général et l'idée directrice sont fort nettes.'

75 See 247 and 243 (dedicatory letter to Christoph von Stadion): 'my life (and what remains could easily lie in the palm of a small hand or within a closed fist) . . .'

76 See eg Wolfgang Faber Capito's comment to Bonifacius Amerbach, letter 1980 (Strasbourg, 20 September 1535) in *Die Amerbachkorrespondenz* ed Alfred Hartmann (*Die Briefe aus den Jahren 1531–1536)* (Basel 1943–8) IV 375: 'S. Lego Concionatorem Erasmi, quo non memini me hoc seculo legere librum his temporibus, adde et meo genio, fructuosiorem. Ambiguum reddiderat prefatio, quae invitum ad id muneris fuisse preseferebat. A quanta copia, quam appositus apparatus! Nihil scio, quo post lectionem Paulinam aeque afficiar, quia ubique ignaviam meam extimulat, incitat, impellit . . .' (quoted by Kleinhans 25 n4).

Reformers.[77] Though we have no conclusive evidence that the reform commission at the Council of Trent in 1545–6, which worked on the preparatory and final drafts of the conciliar decree on preaching, had a copy of *Ecclesiastes* to consult,[78] the considerable similarities in its document of 17 June 1546 (Session 5 *Decretum secundum: super lectione et praedicatione*) with *Ecclesiastes* in language, content, and recommendations strongly suggest that the commission found (or certainly should have found) the work squarely in line with its thinking on preaching reform.[79] Indeed, the often quoted comment by Hubert Jedin that this decree 'was the first, and we may add at once, the only successful attempt to combine church reform with whatever was sound in Christian humanism,'[80] expresses fittingly the impact (however unacknowledged) of Erasmus' life's work on Catholic reform at Trent and in the decades to follow.

We might well assume that Erasmus had many reasons for composing *Ecclesiastes* beyond the pressures put upon him by John Fisher, Jan Becker, and others. If we were to evaluate the state of preaching in Erasmus' day based on his comments in this text and elsewhere, we would find it hard to imagine that any members of the faithful remained in the church.[81] Erasmus himself no doubt believed there was a dearth of competent evangelists and that much had to be done to address the sorry plight of preaching. Like Jesus who asked that we pray to the lord of the harvest (Luke 10:2), Erasmus pleads that 'those who grieve sincerely over this should ask Christ with ardent and constant prayers to deign to send workers for his harvest or, to put it better, to send sowers to his

* * * * *

77 See the account of one crypto-Lutheran's reception of *Ecclesiastes* in John W. O'Malley 'Lutheranism in Rome, 1542–43 – The Treatise by Alfonso Zorrilla' *Thought* 54 (1979) 262–73; for the work's significance and wider impact see Debora K. Shuger *Sacred Rhetoric: The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton 1988) 58–64.

78 Tanner II 669. The text is also found in *Decretum secundum publicatum in ea quinta sessione super lectione et praedicatione* in *Concilium Tridentinum* V 241–3.

79 McGinness 'Erasmian Legacy' 95–8; see also Kleinhans 83–4.

80 Hubert Jedin *A History of the Council of Trent* trans Ernest Graf, 2 vols (St Louis 1963–) II 122–3. Jedin does not discuss the possible connection between the preaching-reform commission and Erasmus' *Ecclesiastes*, but he calls attention to the Erasmian influence on the commission.

81 See the important extensive note on the state of preaching in Erasmus' day in 'The Well-to-do Beggars' CWE 39 487–9 n46, which cautions against taking sweeping statements on the decay of preaching too seriously. The author calls attention to the large body of evidence suggesting 'an upsurge of interest in preaching' in the fifteenth century.

field.'[82] Lamenting the lands lost to Christ where preachers had failed – the East, Ethiopia, Palestine, Asia proper, Greece – Erasmus exclaims, 'Immortal God, how much land lies open in the world where the seed of the Gospel either has not yet been cast or else was cast in such a way that there are more weeds than wheat.'[83] Though Christendom had indeed suffered substantial territorial losses in the previous two centuries, behind Erasmus' laments and prayers lies the conviction that if enough clergy preached the word honestly and sincerely, God's grace would be virtually irresistible and the moral regeneration of society inevitable. Erasmus never explicitly attributes Christendom's territorial losses to the moral decline of society, but he evidently shares in this way of thinking.[84] To him the primary reason for the moral decline and abominations of the age was the want of good preachers to proclaim God's word 'in season, out of season,'[85] to the very ends of the earth. Christ's word was missing where it was meant to be.

Erasmus' remarks on the debased quality of preaching in his time, though illuminating, offer us little new information. The Roman church had for centuries been concerned about the poor quality of preaching. Long before Erasmus, major councils of the church had looked at the problem and called for reform. The tenth constitution of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), 'On Training Preachers' (*De praedicatoribus instituendis*), was a milestone for the reform of preaching, and the contents of its constitution appear in Erasmus' and others' writings down to the Council of Trent (1545–63). Lateran IV declared the 'nourishment of God's word ... to be especially necessary, since just as the body is fed with material food so the soul

* * * * *

82 See book 1 357 below.

83 Book 1 358 below; see also Tracy (1) 88.

84 See eg letter to Ludwig Baer (Basel, 30 March 1529), Ep 2136:114–27 / Allen 2136: 117–27: 'How these stormy events will finally turn out is something we must leave in the hands of God. I am persuaded that a man who plants his foot on the immovable rock cannot perish. It may well be that, by these upheavals and disasters, the Lord wishes to correct our ways; for if we must admit the truth, our morals have fallen far, far short of true and genuine holiness, and this is especially the case with those who seemed to be pillars of the church. I make this judgment not by the demanding standard of the gospel spirit, but even in comparison with the decrees, issued by the popes of earlier times, on the proper conduct of priests and clerks, countless examples of which are recorded in a little work by Jean Gerson [And how greatly the morals of our age have declined even since the time of Gerson!]' Cf *In psalmum 38* CWE 65.

85 Cf 2 Tim 4:2.

is fed with spiritual food ...' Recognizing that many bishops singly were unable to preach to their flocks because of the 'large and scattered dioceses' they administered, it mandated they appoint suitable individuals who could build up the faithful with their words and deeds. The document further instructed bishops to support these men 'with what is necessary' and that 'in both cathedral and other conventual churches' there be appointed 'suitable men whom the bishops can have as coadjutors and cooperators not only in the office of preaching but also in hearing confessions and enjoining penances and in other matters which are conducive to the salvation of souls ...'[86] The council refers to the decree of Lateran III (1179) that addressed the place of cathedral schools, recognizing their importance for advancing clerical literacy and mandating that each cathedral church provide an adequate benefice for a master of its school.[87] Erasmus' own recommendations follow closely these earlier conciliar pronouncements.

A comparison of Lateran IV's decree on preaching with that of Lateran V (1512–17) suggests that by the early sixteenth century the council fathers found even greater need for preaching reform. Though we have no evidence Erasmus himself examined either council's documents on preaching, just a few years before he began *Ecclesiastes*, Lateran V issued its decree on preaching (Session 11, *Supernae maiestatis praesidio*, 19 December 1516), which in its *dicta* and theology is strikingly similar to Erasmus' presentation of this office,[88] as well as in its castigation of the irregular practices of contemporary preachers. In unprecedented language for its denunciation of abuses in the pulpit, Lateran V reminded clergy that preaching is 'of the first importance, very necessary (*praecipuum ac pernecessarium*),'[89] and

* * * * *

86 Tanner I 239–40

87 Lateran III canon 18; see Tanner I 220.

88 Tanner I 634–8. There is much to suggest that Erasmus was familiar with Lateran V's document on preaching from Session 11 (19 December 1516), but much remains for scholarly investigation. See Nelson H. Minnich 'Erasmus and the Fifth Lateran Council (1512–17)' in *Erasmus of Rotterdam: The Man and the Scholar* ed J. Sperna Weiland and W.Th.M. Frijhoff (Leiden 1988) 46–60, who states, 'Although he seems never to have cited the conciliar decree on preaching, many of its provisions were in line with his own thinking ...' (52 and n24). We might add too that many of the words and images were as well, and that Erasmus recommends that preachers be familiar with papal and conciliar decrees (see book 4 CWE 68 1097).

89 Tanner I 634. Significant is the word *praecipuum* 'of the first importance, chief, principal, main, etc,' which is used throughout in reference to the teaching office of the preacher-bishop.

deplored the dereliction of those 'preaching many and various things contrary to the teachings and examples' of the apostles, 'a medley of fraud and error.'[90] The document conveys the impression that bad preaching was everywhere rampant: '[T]hese preachers, unmindful of their duty, are striving in their sermons not for the benefit of the hearers but rather for their own self-display.' It rebukes them for disregarding canon law, 'twisting the sense of Scripture in many places, often giving it rash and false interpretations,' 'preaching what is false,' 'merely following their own private interpretation,' putting forth apocalyptic nonsense as fact.[91] It urges that 'God's church suffer no scandal from their preaching' and that imprudent individuals refrain from attacking 'those who are honoured with pontifical rank and other prelates of the church.'[92]

To remedy these evils, Lateran v required that anyone with the duty to preach first be examined by his superior, and that wheresoever a preacher goes he should 'provide a guarantee to the bishop and other local ordinaries concerning his examination and competence . . .'[93] Ministers of the word are also commanded 'to preach and expound the Gospel truth and Holy Scripture in accordance with the exposition, interpretation, and commentaries that the church or long use has approved and accepted for teaching until now, and will accept in the future, without any addition contrary to its true meaning or in conflict with it. They are always to insist on the meanings which are in harmony with the words of Sacred Scripture and with the interpretations, properly and wisely understood, of the Doctors mentioned above.'[94] The council forbids 'predicting some future events as based on the sacred writings,' nor may preachers 'presume to declare that they know them from the Holy Spirit or from divine revelation . . . Rather, at the command of the divine word, let them expound and proclaim *the Gospel to every creature*, rejecting vices and commending virtues.'[95] And in

* * * * *

90 Tanner 1 635

91 See Rosa Maria Dessì 'La prophétie, l'Évangile et l'État' in *Parole du praedicateur* 1 395–444. See also the short account of preaching in Hans-Georg Beck et al *From the High Middle Ages to the Eve of the Reformation* trans Anselm Briggs, IV of *Handbook of Church History* Hubert Jedin and John Dolan (New York 1986) 574–8; and Walter Brandmüller '"*Traditio Scripturae Interpres*": The Teaching of the Councils on the Right Interpretation of Scripture up to the Council of Trent' *The Catholic Historical Review* 73 (1987) 523–40, especially 535–40.

92 Tanner 1 636

93 Tanner 1 636

94 Tanner 1 636–7

95 Tanner 1 637

sentiments Erasmus will later echo clearly, Lateran v insists that preachers 'foster everywhere the peace and mutual love so much commended by our Redeemer . . .'[96] and 'not rend the seamless garment of Christ,' nor preach 'scandalous detraction' of their ecclesiastical or other superiors. Finally, the council directs that the ideas of those who believe they are endowed with the spirit of prophecy, 'before they are published, or preached to the people, are to be understood as reserved for examination by the apostolic see'; and if this is not possible, then to have the 'alleged inspirations' examined by the local ordinary who will appoint 'three or four knowledgeable and serious men to examine the matter carefully with him' to see whether such opinions may be published.[97] Violators of these canons would be subject to punishments and the penalty of excommunication, whose lifting was reserved to the Roman pontiff.[98] Individuals found violating these canons were to be informed that the office of preaching is forbidden to them forever. Despite such stern admonitions, Lateran v's decrees seem to have had little impact beyond the city of Rome.[99] The decrees, however, would be strikingly similar to the theology and positive recommendations of *Ecclesiastes*, as we note below.

The distressing picture Erasmus paints of contemporary preachers whom he heard personally or knew of by repute largely concurs with Lateran v's assessment.[100] It is extremely difficult, of course, to evaluate the level of quality in contemporary preaching solely on the basis of this council's decrees, Erasmus' own observations, or the comments of contemporaries, and we cannot pursue the question here. Certainly we should assume that many excellent preachers were also active in the years at the time of Lateran v, and not just men like John Colet (1467–1519) and Jean Vitrier (c 1456–d before 15 June 1521),[101] whom Erasmus knew personally, but others as well like Johann Ulrich Surgant (c 1450–1503),[102] who in 1503 offered

* * * * *

96 Tanner I 637
97 On censorship by local bishops, see Minnich 50–1.
98 Tanner I 638
99 Minnich 54
100 See eg his harsh comments on contemporary preaching in *Ratio* 299–305.
101 See Erasmus' profile of the Franciscan Jean Vitrier in his letter to Justus Jonas (Anderlecht, 13 June 1521), Ep 1211. See Godin 6–29; and his *Erasme: Vies de Jean Vitrier et de John Colet* trans and annot André Godin, introduction by Jean-Claude Margolin (Angers 1982); André Godin *Spiritualité*. See also CEBR III 408–9 and Tracy (1) 32–3.
102 *Manuale curatorum praedicandi* (Basel: M. Furter 1503). See Rudolf Hirsch 'Surgant's List of Recommended Books for Preachers (1502–1503)' *Renaissance Quarterly* 20 (1967) 199–210; and Dorothea Roth *Die mittelalterliche Predigt-*

preachers a handbook for improving their sermons. Moreover, the quality of preaching likely varied considerably from region to region, city to city, and village to village.[103] We might assume too, as Erasmus does, that in many places, even in a major city like Bruges, the quality of some preaching could be so low in its pastoral approach and theological content that the effect upon the faithful was deplorable. At the same time, however, we might also infer that Erasmus' ridicule of a fatuous 'man in very splendid vestments' at Bruges who concocts an absurd allegory about St Augustine as the spring from which flow the four mendicant orders and as a champion of confession suggests that Bruges had in fact sophisticated congregations that appreciated excellent preachers and had little patience for purveyors of such outlandish nonsense.[104] We might well assume that many competent preachers were indeed active in Bruges and in the lesser towns and villages of Brabant.

Before, during, and after Erasmus' writing of *Ecclesiastes*, some ecclesiastical synods, notable prelates, and humanists also took up the matter of preaching reform.[105] The Council of Sens (1527–8), the Council of Bourges (1528), and the First Council of Cologne (1536) addressed preaching reform in their dioceses. In Italy the noteworthy prelate Gian Matteo Giberti (1495–1543),[106] cardinal and bishop of Verona, and later Gasparo Contarini

* * * * *

theorie und das Manuale curatorum des Johann Ulrich Surgant Basler Beiträge zur Geschichtswissenschaft 58 (Basel 1956). Hirsch notes that Surgant's book 'is the earliest bibliography of books dealing with the art of preaching' (201).

103 See O'Malley *Praise and Blame* for the high quality of the sermons preached before the popes (1451–1521). For a brief but illuminating look at the authority, role, and influence of the church at this time, see Augustijn *Erasmus* 12–15.

104 See eg Erasmus' letter to Pieter Wichmans (Bruges, [c 29 August] 1521), Ep 1231:35–41: 'In ancient days hardly anyone preached a sermon without posting secretaries to take down what he said. If that were the practice today, heavens! What stories we should hear. Men who say things like that in the famous city of Bruges, which contains so many educated men, and so many men of lively wits and sound judgment even without academic education – what do you suppose they say in the villages, and across the dinner-table? And these are our pillars of orthodoxy.'

105 See McGinness *Right Thinking* 33–5.

106 For Giberti's *Constitutions*, after 1527, see Olin *Catholic Reformation* 145–6. Giberti's ideas fall squarely in line with Erasmus' recommendations: '... to preach and proclaim His Gospel sincerely to the people and to follow in His footsteps when He taught the Apostles 'Preach the Gospel to every creature ...' (146). See Adriano Prosperi *Tra evangelismo e controriforma: G.M. Giberti (1495–1543)* (Rome 1969) chapters 5 and 6.

(1483–1542),[107] cardinal and bishop of Belluno, focused on the problems of preaching in light of the challenges to Catholic doctrines brought about by the spread of Lutheran teachings, especially that on justification by faith alone. The urgency of the problem was no doubt recognized by many prelates, but a concerted, full-scale approach to renewing preaching throughout the dioceses of Europe could hardly occur without the reform of the episcopate itself, which would require a general council of the church. The need for preaching reform was also apparent to a few exceptional individuals who appreciated the potential of the classical authors for improving the quality of sacred oratory; among these were the Franciscan Lorenzo Guglielmo Traversagni, Johann Reuchlin, Philippus Melanchthon, Veit Dietrich, the German Franciscan Nicolaus Herborn,[108] and, of course, Erasmus.

Among the ancient pagan authorities on prescriptive rhetoric, none held greater status for Erasmus than Quintilian (Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, c 35–c 100), Roman educator and author of the *Institutio oratoria* on the grammatical and rhetorical training of the orator in the Ciceronian tradition.[109] Erasmus tells us he was 'the most painstaking of all rhetoricians,'[110] the supreme authority in the art of public speaking, and it is from the *Institutio oratoria*'s 'copious instructions' that he draws the bulk of his advice on speaking, as he had for his earlier works on education such as the *De ratione studii*, *De copia*, and *De recta pronuntiatione*.[111] Though following Quintilian closely, Erasmus (and following Reuchlin) underscores the infinitely different educational goal of *Ecclesiastes* from that of Quintilian's treatise. Whereas Quintilian considered being 'a good man, skilled in speaking' (*vir*

* * * * *

107 For Gasparo Contarini, see Elisabeth G. Gleason *Cardinal Gasparo Contarini: Venice, Rome, and Reform* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1993) 260–76.

108 For Herborn see O'Malley 'Sacred Rhetoric' 8–9.

109 For the ancient rhetorical traditions, see James J. Murphy 'Chapter I: The Four Ancient Traditions' in *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from St. Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley 1974) 3–42. Murphy notes (22 n44) that 'this rhetorical portion of the *Institutio* ['Quintilian's treatment of *dispositio, actio*, and *memoria*'] apparently did not survive intact through the Middle Ages. The *Textus mutilatus* available to John of Salisbury (c 1159), for instance, had a great lacuna beginning at I.i.6 and continuing to V.xiv.12, and a portion of VIII was also missing ... Although Petrarch knew the *Institutio*, the great post-classical popularity of the book came only in the fifteenth century.'

110 See book 3 CWE 68 877.

111 The *editio princeps* of Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* appeared at Rome in 1470 and was based upon the manuscript of Quintilian found by Poggio Bracciolini at Sankt Gallen. Two editions of Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* were printed by Aldus, the first in 1514, and the second edited by Andrea Navagero in 1521.

bonus dicendi peritus) as the greatest excellence in life and defined his purpose as 'the education of the perfect orator,'[112] Erasmus reformulates these qualities in terms of the preacher: 'a heart clean of all vices and human desires,'[113] or as he states elsewhere, 'a consummate purity, great strength of faith, a singular and burning love.'[114] The essential, infinite difference between the pagan orator and the Christian preacher Erasmus expressed succinctly in his *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum*: 'Orators agree on the definition of one of their number as "a good man, skilled in speaking." So why should we be dissatisfied with "A theologian is a pious man, skilled in speaking of the divine mysteries," or "Theology is piety linked to skill in speaking of the divine"?'[115] Quintilian and Erasmus both emphasize the crucial importance

* * * * *

112 For 'a good man skilled in speaking,' see Johann Reuchlin *Liber congestorum de arte praedicandi* (Pforzheim: Thomas Anshelm 1504) [Aiii], who modifies the phrase to 'a godly man skilled in speaking ...' (*Praedicator est vir religiosus, dicendi peritus, auctoritate superioris ecclesiastico pulpito praefectus*). See also Grünwald 72–5. The definition is attributed to Marcus Porcius Cato (the Elder); see Quintilian 12.1.1 ('But above all he must possess the quality which Cato places first and which is the very nature of things the greatest and most important, that is, he must be a good man ...') and 1. Pr. 9 ('The first essential for such an one is that he should be a good man, and consequently we demand of him not merely the possession of exceptional gifts of speech, but of all the excellences of character as well'). See also Cicero *De oratore* book 1. Erasmus understands Quintilian as sketching an 'ideal' or 'exemplar': see his comment in the letter to Paul Volz (Basel, 14 August 1518), Ep 858:361–3: 'Did Quintilian show contempt for the entire profession of orators when he composed the pattern of such an orator as had never yet existed?' Erasmus' admiration for and use of Quintilian for instruction in good Latin is well known; see eg *De copia* CWE 24 279–659; *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 293–346; *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 371 and passim. Murphy remarks on Quintilian's importance in Erasmus' day: 'After Cicero, the most important ancient rhetorical figure in this period was Quintilian. His *Institutio oratoria* was edited by five different scholars: J.A. Campanus ... Johannes Andreas de Bussis ... Omnibonus Leonicenus ... Andreas Ponticus ... and Raphael Regius who added his own commentary ... Finally, the text appeared with commentaries by Laurentius Valla, Pomponius Laetus, and Johannes Sulpitius Verulanus ...' *Incunabula* 14; see also idem *Rhetoric* 357–63.

113 See 284 below.

114 See 301 below.

115 *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* CWE 71 55. See Georges Chantraine 'L'Apologia ad Latomum: Deux conceptions de la théologie' in *Scrinium* II 51–75. See also *Ratio* 193: 'But the chief goal of theologians is to expound the divine letters wisely, to give an account of the faith, not of frivolous questions, to speak seriously and effectually about godliness [*de pietate*], to produce tears, inflame hearts to heavenly things.'

of *ethos* – that unimpeachable character of the individual which lends credibility to everything he says – but Erasmus goes far beyond this in demanding that every preacher be like Christ, commended above all for his godliness (*pietas*), distinguished for teaching by word and example (*verbo exemploque*).

Aware that much of Quintilian's instruction focused on educating orators for the courts of Rome, Erasmus at times parries the objections of imaginary critics, declaring, 'Our business is with the preacher.'[116] 'Someone will say, "You are training an advocate, not a preacher" ';[117] he rejoins, 'So I shall show what use comes to the preacher from this,' maintaining that 'these conjectures are often useful for proof' in certain types of sermons.[118] Erasmus may admit, however, that not everything Quintilian offers is of particular relevance for the preacher, but he never advises the reader not to pursue the author's thoughtful advice. Erasmus' purpose in using Quintilian is to offer as many methods and techniques as might be useful for instructing the aspiring preacher in oratorical rhetoric[119] without imposing rigid rules.[120] As the subject matter is vast and the field for invention virtually

* * * * *

116 See book 3 CWE 68 756: 'Nobis cum ecclesiasta res est.' Another formulation of Erasmus' purpose might well be that which he gives in his letter to Simon Pistoris (Basel, [c 2 September] 1526), Ep 1744:404. 'I have had no other aims than these: to join the study of languages and letters to more serious disciplines; to bring scholastic theology, which had often degenerated into mere sophistic wrangling, back to its roots in Holy Scripture; to have less ceremony in our practice, more piety in our hearts; to encourage bishops and priests to remember their office and urge monks to be true to what they are claimed to be; and, finally, to rid the minds of men of many wrong-headed and misguided ideas that have now plunged the world into confusion.' For biographical information on Pistoris, see Ep 1125 4n.

117 See book 2 CWE 68 638.

118 See book 2 CWE 68 599: 'I know that rhetoricians impart many other instructions regarding propositions, penetrating and not unpleasant to know, but we are training a preacher here, not a pleader of cases or a sophist or a declaimer.'

119 George A. Kennedy distinguishes between primary rhetoric (oratory) and secondary rhetoric (literary production); see his *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* 2nd ed (Chapel Hill 1999) 1–5, but I follow Ronald G. Witt's 'oratorical rhetoric' to describe 'prose that aimed at public, oral expression.' See Witt *Footsteps* 1–30, especially 8–12; see also his 'Kristeller's Humanists as Heirs of the Medieval *Dictatores*' in *Interpretations of Renaissance Humanism* ed Angelo Mazzocco (Leiden 2006) 21–35.

120 One had to use rules of rhetoric judiciously, never letting the method subvert the very purpose for which one took up the practice of speaking in the first place; the same held true for the principles of dialectic. Erasmus had made clear this method of instruction in rhetoric in *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 387: 'Rhetoric, within limits, must be studied with care, but it must not become a fetish: the point of it is to help in writing and speaking, not to instil

infinite, he maintains that almost everything Quintilian wrote can in some way assist the aspiring preacher. Whether it be instruction on the types of speaking, styles of speaking, decorum, rhetorical devices, gestures, delivery, the parts of oratory, handling the emotions, etc, Quintilian is eminently useful. However, accommodating Quintilian's 'science of speaking well'[121] to the practice of public (sacred) oratory does represent something of a shift in Erasmus, whose own pedagogical writings heretofore had focused primarily on the acquisition of good letters (*bonae litterae*) for writing, reading, conversation, and instruction in godliness (*pietas*), and not expressly for public oratory as such.[122]

Quintilian's theory of education offers Erasmus an uncommon benefit in plotting out the lifelong training of the preacher, who from the cradle onwards should advance programmatically in the four crucial elements that foster correct speaking: 'nature, art, imitation or example, and practice or exercise.'[123] Progressing through ever more complex disciplines, while never becoming too immersed in any one of them lest he lose the ultimate aim of his career, the preacher, with God's assistance, will strive throughout his life to embody the Christian model of the Roman *vir bonus dicendi peritus*.[124]

* * * * *

an anxious obedience to teachers' rules.' Hoffmann notes, 'It is clear that Erasmus freed himself from the rigid structure and strict terminology of rhetorical theory to pursue his theological intention' (*Rhetoric* 172).

121 Quintilian 3.3.12: 'The orator's task is to speak well, but rhetoric is the science of speaking well' ('Nam bene dicere est oratoris, rhetorice tamen erit bene dicendi scientia; vel, ut alii putant, artificis est persuadere, vis autem persuadendi artis').

122 See O'Malley 'Grammar' 81, 97–8; and 'Sacred Rhetoric' 21. For Erasmus' preference for written language over spoken language, see Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 79–80: 'According to J. Chomarat, he [Erasmus] gave the spoken word priority over the written word. And yet: "Erasme est l'homme des livres, en tous les sens: bibliothèques, écritoire, atelier de l'imprimeur." The humanist could not have been unaffected by what Cicero had said: "The pen is the best and most eminent author and teacher of eloquence, and rightly so." It is therefore plausible to assume that, despite his conventional appreciation for oration as such, Erasmus assigned to literature a higher value. He interpreted texts exclusively and showed no interest in delivering his work in public oratory.'

123 See *De copia* CWE 24 284; book 2 CWE 68 483; cf Pliny *Letters* 3.5.5.

124 For this theme, see Lausberg §§32, 1151. Quintilian gives a brief summary of this in 12.5.1: 'not merely of the art . . . but of the orator himself. These are the weapons that he should have ready to his hand, this the knowledge with which he must be equipped, while it must be supplemented by a ready store of words and figures, power of imagination, skill in arrangement, retentiveness of memory and grace of delivery. But of all these qualities the highest is that loftiness of soul (*animi praestantia*) . . .'

And although some humanist-trained clerics, especially in Italy, had already embraced classical rhetorical methods and classicizing techniques for sacred orations,[125] Erasmus' programme to transform the ancient Roman ideal of the perfect orator into the ideal Christian *ecclesiastes* (*orator christianus*) was his own creation, and one that would flourish over the next decades as a cultural model promoted by Catholic (above all Jesuit) and many Protestant teachers of rhetoric and authors of ecclesiastical rhetorics.[126] In Roman Catholicism, this ideal would be epitomized by the 'right-thinking' (orthodox) clergyman, above all the bishop, aflame with zeal, who combining Christian piety with eloquence and theological acumen fed his flock daily with the food of the gospel; the ideal would come to define Catholic clerical culture throughout the post-Tridentine era, 'the age of eloquence,' to use Marc Fumaroli's term.[127]

Before the publication of *Ecclesiastes* in 1535, clergy could find homiletic models and develop preaching techniques by turning to the many handbooks for preachers known throughout the Middle Ages as the 'arts of preaching' (*artes praedicandi*), which became widespread after the year 1200.[128]

* * * * *

125 See O'Malley *Praise and Blame* 36–122; John M. McManamon *Funeral Oratory and the Cultural Ideals of Italian Humanism* (Chapel Hill and London 1989) passim.

126 See McGinness *Right Thinking* 9–28.

127 Fumaroli. The author devotes only a few pages to Erasmus' *Ecclesiastes* (106–10) but calls attention to its later significance: 'Ce livre est le point de départ du long cheminement qui aboutira à l'éloquence sacrée "classique" en France' (109); 'L'*Ecclesiastes* d'Erasme nous apparaît comme la plus savante somme d'art oratoire de la Renaissance, le grand traité d'expressionnisme chrétien' (108); 'L'œuvre d'Erasme domine l'histoire de la rhétorique humaniste' (110). Following Charles Béné he refers to it 'avant tout comme une immense glose du *De Doctrina Christiana*' (106).

128 Unfortunately there is little room to list the many excellent studies on the *artes praedicandi*. Essential are: Th.-M. Charland, O.P. *Artes praedicandi: contribution à l'histoire de la rhétorique au moyen age* Publications de l'Institut d'Études Médiévales d'Ottawa VII (Paris and Ottawa 1936); Hervé Martin *Le métier de prédicateur en France septentrionale à la fin du moyen age (1350–1520)* (Paris 1988); Marianne G. Briscoe *Artes praedicandi* and Barbara H. Jaye *Artes Orandi* (Turnhout 1992); Murphy chapter VI: '*Ars praedicandi*: The Art of Preaching' in *Rhetoric* 269–355, especially 310–12; *Three Medieval Rhetorical Arts* ed idem, trans Leopold Krul (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1971); see now the useful publication, *Medieval Sermon Studies* International Medieval Sermon Studies Society (Leeds 1991–); Caplan; idem *Mediaeval* Artes Praedicandi: *A Hand-list* (Ithaca 1934); Gilson 'Michel Menot'; and idem *Sermons choisis de Michel Menot (1508–1518)* ed Joseph Nève (Paris 1924). For continuities between Erasmus and the tradition of *artes praedicandi*, see especially Kilcoyne and Jennings. See also Emile V. Telle '"To every thing there is a season . . .": Ways and Fashions in

At the same time many sermons of the mendicants and other clergy became widely available in manuscript, and later in printed editions, as examples of notable sacred discourse. Significantly, Erasmus neither refers to the *artes* in general nor makes mention of them in particular, nor does he recommend the sermons of his contemporaries, though we know of more than two hundred *artes* produced in the three hundred fifty years before 1500, many of which were in circulation, and we know of numerous published sermon collections that would surely have been available to him.[129]

The type of preaching prescribed by the *artes* is commonly called the thematic sermon because the preacher usually began his sermon by presenting a 'theme' (*thema*),[130] often a short passage – a verse or two – of Sacred Scripture, sometimes following this with a proposition, which he might divide into two or three parts to announce the principal parts of his discourse. Before proposing the theme, the preacher might also offer a 'protheme' (or 'antetheme') as a way to gain the audience's good will; this too might consist of a biblical passage, to which he sometimes added a short prayer for divine assistance. After these introductory elements he delivered an exordium, which he would follow up with a division (*divisio*) announcing the points he planned to cover; this in turn took him into the divisions and subdivisions of the narrative based upon the theme stated at the outset, each of which might consist of a central argument which, in log-

* * * * *

the Art of Preaching on the Eve of the Religious Upheaval in the Sixteenth Century"' ERSY 2 (1982) 13–24. For practical works for preachers on encouraging the laity to engender virtues and extirpate vices, see eg Thomas de Chobham *Summa de commendatione virtutum et extirpatione vitiorum* ed Franco Morenzoni (Turnhout 1997); and Alan of Lille.

129 See Murphy *Incunabula* (Units 22 and 23 Rhetoric, and Units 31, 23, 33, 73 Sermons), which contains printed treatises on preaching (*ars praedicandi*). Murphy notes: 'In a Christian society, especially one with a 350-year tradition of *artes praedicandi* that produced more than 200 separate medieval preaching manuals, one might expect that the revived European interest in classical rhetoric in the fifteenth century would have produced an immediate application to preaching. But this was not the case. In fact there were only two original works on preaching printed in this period (ie before 1500), and only five medieval treatises plus the fifth-century *De doctrina christiana* of St Augustine. The great age of Renaissance preaching theory was to be the latter part of the following century.' See also idem *Rhetoric* 275–6.

130 One recalls Chaucer's Pardoner telling his fellow pilgrims that when he preaches 'My theme is alwey oon, and evere was – Radix malorum est Cupiditas . . .' (*Canterbury Tales* 'Pardoner's Prologue' lines 333–4) and then proceeds to describe his sermon's contents.

ical arrangement, he expanded by adding proofs or demonstrations from Scripture, authorities, reasons, discussions, questions, minor arguments, examples, analogies, or allegories. After completing the narrative he ended the sermon, often rather quickly, though sometimes he might include a conclusion (*peroratio*, *conclusio*, *epilogus*), which like the sermon's beginning also consisted of a prayer. The type of sermon following more or less this format also came to be referred to as a 'scholastic sermon' or 'university-style sermon' because its principles of organization were suggestive of the methods the scholastics used when expounding theological questions.[131] As Erasmus notes, these sermons, might sometimes vary with the addition of a silent prayer, the sign of the cross, an invocation of the Trinity,[132] a fuller statement of the theme or protheme, a brief discourse on the divisions, extended distinctions, formulized closings, and doxology ('Who live and reign, etc.').[133] The length of the thematic sermons could be brief or extended for hours, depending on the circumstances and the disposition of the preacher. Ideally this type of discourse had much to commend it; it was flexible, structurally clear, generally scriptural, and could be used to great effect depending on the preacher's talents.[134] Not surprisingly, perhaps, Erasmus' preferences in constructing examples of sermons in *Ecclesiastes* follow this format, though without rigidity, abstruseness, or the arid excesses of the scholastic preachers whom he was wont to lambaste, as we see below.

We know of many renowned preachers of the Middle Ages who preached according to the thematic format. Erasmus commends Bernard of Clair-

* * * * *

131 See Murphy *Rhetoric* 311; see also 325–6, where he suspects that this type of sermon might not have arisen in the milieu of a thirteenth-century university. See *Ecclesiastes* book 3 CWE 68 733: 'The addition of a question seems to have arisen from the ostentation of the scholastics . . .'

132 See Erasmus' example of invoking the Trinity in his *De immensa Dei misericordia* CWE 70 77. See also his comment on the practice in his letter to Noël Béda, Ep 1581:149.

133 Book 2 CWE 68 554. The concluding doxology takes different forms, depending on which person of the Trinity is being addressed; if eg the Son is being addressed, the short form is *Qui vivis et regnas per omnia saecula saeculorum*; the long form *Qui vivis et regnas cum deo patre in unitate spiritus sancti deus per omnia saecula saeculorum*.

134 See Caplan 94: 'But while acknowledging the pedantry and concentrated formalism, we can find much to praise in the methodical ordering of the thematic sermon . . . we can find much to laud, too, in the inventional scheme, and in the dexterity and practical variety of treatment, and can appreciate that the theory served its day well.'

vaux (1090–1153) for his skill in preaching,[135] and many of Bernard's sermons fall in line with the above schema of the thematic sermon, though with none of the obsessive divisions, distinctions, authorities, and subtleties that would characterize the sermons of many later scholastic theologians.[136] Apart from some negative general comments about the more novel elements, Erasmus does not call for an end to the thematic sermon; in fact most of his precepts are fully compatible with the format employed by various *artes praedicandi*, but he notes that such elaborately structured modern sermons have 'retreated from ancient precedents,'[137] and he appeals for a return to those simpler, more effective examples of sacred oratory of the church Fathers who offered a better way to preach and to move hearts.

The *artes praedicandi* in general sought to continue the preaching tradition of the church Fathers by providing instruction in the way Origen, Basil, John Chrysostom, Augustine, Gregory the Great, and other saintly bishops and clergy carried out the ministry of the word. Though aware that some early Christian writers were wary about using the classical authors because of their paganism, writers of the medieval *artes* did not reject the writings of the ancient grammarians and rhetoricians but rather drew lessons and

* * * * *

135 Book 2 494–5. See Bernard of Clairvaux *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis et de diversis* (Speyer: Peter Drach, between 1481–2); for his sermons, see Jean Leclercq 'Introduction to Saint Bernard's Sermons *De diversis*' *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 42 1 (2007) 37–62.

136 See Robert of Basevorn's comment on Bernard in Murphy *Rhetoric* 345: 'The method of Saint Bernard is without method, exceeding the style and capability of almost all men of genius. He more than all the rest stresses Scripture in all his sayings, so that scarcely one statement is his own which does not depend upon an authority in the Bible or on a multitude of authorities. His procedure is always devout, always artful. He takes a certain theme or something in place of it and begins it artfully, divides it into two, three, or many members, confirms it and ends it, using every rhetorical color so that the whole shines with a double glow, earthly and heavenly; and this, it seems to me, invites to devotion those who understand more feelingly, and helps more in the novel methods which we are now discussing. No one has so effectively joined the two at the same time.' Erasmus notes however that Bernard's sermons are directed to a monastic audience, and for this reason are not as suited to those preaching to a mixed group of the laity (see book 2 CWE 68 495). Bernard regularly addresses his audience with *vobis*, *fratres*, or *charissimi*, referring to his monastic brethren; and his use of Scripture is often applied tropologically to living the monastic life. See eg *Sermones de diversis*.

137 Book 3 CWE 68 730

inspiration from them.[138] The *artes* ran a long course from the late twelfth century to Erasmus' day, and over the years their preceptive material tended to grow in technical complexity to accommodate the intricacies of theological subjects whether for discoursing on the Creed, Our Father, Ten Commandments, the vices and virtues, the Virgin Mary, the angels, and the saints, or for admonishing one's monastic community to fraternal charity, or urging Christians to crusade. To Erasmus these recent sermons fell short of the standards of excellent preaching that characterized the simpler sermons of the church Fathers, which extracted from the Scriptures lessons and inspiration for godly living. Sermons delivered at the medieval universities by doctors of theology, we know, could often sound more like disputations or lectures in theology than discourses on basic doctrines and exhortations to move souls to the love of God and dissuade from sin. Erasmus saw many preachers of these thematic sermons as incapable of giving a good sermon, unaware of their audience, and often rambling on without a point. His purpose now would be to show in a new key how effective communication should be done in the sacred ministry of the word.

It is not clear how many of the *artes praedicandi* Erasmus read, if any at all, as he never tells us, nor does he even mention the *genre*. With his penchant for reading good letters (*bonae litterae*), we might surmise he never found a preaching manual to recommend to others, though it is highly probable that he looked at some, if not many, available to him, and that he would find a goodly number of their precepts compatible with his own. It is also likely Erasmus approached writing *Ecclesiastes* as he did most everything else, by beginning in a fresh way, first going back to the sources (*ad fontes*) where preaching took its start – in the Sacred Scriptures – and examining the words of Christ and his apostles and those who came right after their time, such as Origen and the other church Fathers, to understand how they preached; it meant as well examining the best books on effective speaking, which of course were not the *artes* but the writings of Quintilian, Cicero, and other classical authors who had studied thoroughly the 'science of speaking' and instructed others in public discourse. It also meant examining the key works of later Christian authors who had given advice on preaching, such as Gregory of Nazianzus, Ambrose, and especially Augustine, whose *De doctrina christiana* greatly influences *Ecclesiastes*.[139] Though

* * * * *

138 See eg Caplan 85–6.

139 Béné *Érasme* 378–80. See book 3 CWE 68 972, where Erasmus especially commends Augustine as 'that most vigilant doctor of the Church' who 'has much to teach us in *On Christian Teaching*.' For Erasmus' lifelong involvement with

Erasmus maintains that Augustine's exposition needed to be done 'more simply and more plainly,'[140] his debt to the bishop of Hippo's treatise was considerable and went back many years. Charles Béné draws attention to Erasmus' involvement with the *De doctrina christiana* since 1497 as well as to the legion of borrowings from it he does not reference;[141] Marc Fumaroli concurs with Béné in seeing *Ecclesiastes* 'as an immense gloss on *De doctrina christiana*.'[142] Still, Augustine was not the only Father of the church to whom Erasmus owed so much for help on preaching; Origen, John Chrysostom, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Jerome also stand out prominently for their guidance, precepts, and inspiration for his treatise. And these Latin and Greek Fathers were themselves profoundly influenced by the type of educational programme espoused by Cicero, Quintilian, and other masters of Roman and Greek rhetoric.[143]

To Erasmus the thematic sermon was the customary, acceptable form for preaching as long as it was done 'purely and simply.' But he is quick to point out how dreadfully the scholastics had complicated the form with

* * * * *

Augustine and the church Fathers in general, see Jan den Boeft 'Erasmus and the Church Fathers' in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West from the Carolingians to the Maurists* ed Irena Backus, 2 vols (Leiden 1997) II 537–72; and John C. Olin *Six Essays on Erasmus and a Translation of Erasmus' Letter to Carondelet, 1523* (New York 1979). See also Grünwald 21–4 and 194–214 for commonalities and differences between *Ecclesiastes* and *De doctrina christiana*.

140 Book 2 CWE 68 496: 'The direction of my discourse requires that we sample some of the rhetoricians' precepts that seem appropriate to the preacher's office, something which St Augustine before us attempted in part in his work *De doctrina christiana*. Even if he had omitted nothing, nevertheless the very different nature of the times demands that some things be imparted more simply and more plainly.' For Erasmus' sometimes critical view of Augustine, see Tracy (1) 71–3. Note that Erasmus somewhat misrepresents Augustine's purpose; see *De doctrina christiana* 4.1.2: '. . . I must thwart the expectation of those readers who think that I shall give the rules of rhetoric here which I learned and taught in the secular schools. And I admonish them not to expect such rules from me, not that they have no utility, but because, if they have any, it should be sought elsewhere if perhaps some good man has the opportunity to learn them. But he should not expect these rules from me, either in this work or in any other.'

141 Béné *Érasme* 378–80

142 Fumaroli 106

143 See Murphy *Rhetoric* 21–3 and 21 n45: 'For example, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Gregory of Caesarea [Nyssa (?)], Eusebius of Caesarea, John of Antioch (Chrysostom), and Basil of Caesarea. The influence of Roman education upon the medieval discourse modeled on these Fathers is surely incalculable.'

their many tedious and irrelevant accretions, such as their preference for introducing a 'question' in sermons, which he suggests ought to be curtailed or eliminated.[144] Noteworthy is his satire of the scholastics' sermons in *Moria*, where Folly 'commends' contemporary preachers (mendicants), wryly noting, 'It's absurd but highly enjoyable to see them observe the traditional rules of rhetoric.'[145] She does not attack their rote instruction in oratorical rhetoric but pillories their complete misuse of it before a congregation where they fail to perform appropriately, whether in their gestures, voice, exclamations, use of invocations, exordia or preambles or exposition. These preachers introduce subtleties, novelties, irrelevant topics, displays of theological arrogance, and 'let fly at the ignorant crowd their syllogisms, major and minor, conclusions, corollaries, idiotic hypotheses, and further scholastic rubbish.'[146] They 'trot out some foolish popular anecdote, from the *Mirror of History*, I expect, or the *Deeds of the Romans*,[147] and proceed to interpret it allegorically, tropologically, and anagogically. In this way they complete their chimaera, a monstrosity which even Horace never dreamt of when he wrote "Add to the human head" and so on.'[148] Erasmus does not upbraid mendicant preachers for what (little) they learned from the grammarians or rhetoricians, but for how wretchedly they appropriated it, often following the prescriptions of the rhetoricians so literally that Folly must ask, 'Is there a comedian or cheapjack you'd rather watch than them when they hold forth in their sermons?'[149] None of the preachers have words to say on the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, inculcating virtues, and shunning vice – the central topics at the heart of the medieval preaching tradition.[150] If they appropriate classical rhetorical

* * * * *

144 See eg book 2 CWE 68 539–40.

145 *Moria* CWE 27 132

146 *Moria* CWE 27 134; see also *Ratio* 301.

147 For *Gesta Romanorum* (*Deeds of the Romans*), see book 2 CWE 68 544 n400. See Robert T. Lambdin '*Gesta Romanorum*' in *Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature* ed Robert Thomas Lambdin and Laura Cooner Lambdin (Westport 2000); and Lynn M. Zott '*Gesta Romanorum*' *Classical and Medieval Literature Criticism* 55 (2003) 74–155.

148 Horace *Ars poetica* 1–5

149 *Moria* CWE 27 132

150 See Wenzel 'Preaching' 163: 'From roughly the Fourth Lateran Council on, priests were officially required and exhorted to preach the seven deadly sins together with other catechetical set pieces: the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and more.' See also his 'Vices, Virtues, and Popular Preaching,' in *Medieval and Renaissance Studies: Proceedings of the Southeastern Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* Summer, 1974, ed Dale B.J. Randall (Durham, NC 1976) 28–54, especially 28–30 and notes on 51.

instruction for sacred eloquence, they should also learn how to handle those religious teachings of the church that every Christian needs to know for salvation.

As fundamental as speaking correctly is, *Ecclesiastes* puts before all else the requirement of godliness (*pietas*) in the preacher and defines the duties of the preacher within the Pauline categories of teaching, exhorting, rebuking, and consoling (cf 2 Tim 3:16–17 and 4:2), which Erasmus situates within the three classical 'types of speaking' (*genera dicendi*), particularly within the deliberative type (*genus deliberativum* or *suasorium*). It is here, Erasmus argues, 'the preacher is especially occupied.'[151] This adaptation of the classical *genera* to the explicitly Pauline duties of the preacher decisively breaks from the *artes praedicandi* tradition and marks the beginning of a new *genre* of preaching manuals, the ecclesiastical rhetorics,[152] which will appear widely after the Council of Trent (1545–63). Like *Ecclesiastes* these new ecclesiastical rhetorics place preaching intentionally within the *genera* of classical oratory (judicial, deliberative, demonstrative) and adapt their rhetorical precepts to speaking God's word. The significance of *Ecclesiastes* in creating this new direction in preaching is well summed up by John O'Malley, who observes that after the publication of *Ecclesiastes* the genre of the *artes praedicandi* disappears.[153]

As groundbreaking as *Ecclesiastes* was, applying the principles of classical rhetoric to preaching and epideictic orations at this time was not original with Erasmus. Besides the Fathers of the church, clergy trained in the *studia humanitatis* had already begun to accommodate classical rhetoric to sermons, panegyrics of saints, funeral orations, etc.[154] Erasmus might have been familiar with the sermons of some of the Italian preachers that John O'Malley analyzes in his study of sacred oratory at the papal court (c 1450–1521).[155] Many of these men adapted the classical *genus demonstrativum* ('the art of praise and blame') to discourse on God's marvellous benefits to humankind, the wonders of his creation, salvific deeds, angels, saints, and

* * * * *

151 Book 2 CWE 68 500

152 See O'Malley 'Content' and McGinness *Right Thinking* 49–61.

153 O'Malley 'Sacred Rhetoric' 13; see also Murphy *Incunabula* 15.

154 See John M. McManamon 'The Ideal Renaissance Pope: Funeral Oratory from the Papal Court' *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* 14 (1976) 9–70; idem 'Innovation in Early Humanist Rhetoric: The Oratory of Pier Paolo Vergerio (the Elder)' *Rinascimento* n s 22 (1982) 3–32; and idem 'Pier Paolo Vergerio (the Elder) and the Beginnings of the Humanist Cult of Jerome' *Catholic Historical Review* 71 (1985) 353–71.

155 See also O'Malley 'Content.'

the mysteries of Christ's life. While at Cambridge, Erasmus might very well have looked into the Franciscan Lorenzo Guglielmo Traversagni's *Margarita eloquentiae* or *Rhetorica nova*, 'the first rhetorical text printed in England,'[156] which, among other things, situates preaching primarily in the *genus demonstrativum*; and he certainly must have seen Johann Reuchlin's brief treatise, *Liber congestorum de arte praedicandi* (1504),[157] which enumerated and defined the basic elements of classical rhetoric and demonstrated their place in preaching. It is very likely too that he was acquainted with the works of Reuchlin's grand nephew and pupil, Philippus Melanchthon, who beginning in 1519 followed up on Reuchlin's work with a flurry of his own works on preaching, which use the terms *concio* for the sermon and *concionator* for the preacher long before the appearance of Erasmus' treatise. Melanchthon's *De rhetorica libri tres* (later *Elementa rhetorices*) was published at Wittenberg and at Basel with Froben in 1519, and it too, like Reuchlin's work, addressed the matter of sacred oratory.[158] In 1521

* * * * *

156 Lorenzo Guglielmo Traversagni of Savona taught rhetoric at the University of Cambridge in the 1470s and 1480s, lecturing on the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*; his *Margarita eloquentiae* or *Rhetorica nova* was published by William Caxton during this time as a '"textbook" in the sense that each student was provided with a copy.' See Murphy *Incunabula* 15. See also O'Malley *Praise and Blame* 43–51; and idem 'Sacred Rhetoric' 6–7. Traversagni later published an abbreviated version of this work, which can be found translated and edited by Ronald H. Martin: *The* Epitoma Margarite Castigate Eloquentie *of Laurentius Gulielmus Traversagni de Saona* (Leeds 1986).

157 Pforzheim: Thomas Anshelm 1504. See O'Malley 'Content' and Lawrence D. Green 'Classical and Medieval Rhetorical Traditions in Traversagni's *Margarita Eloquentiae*' *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 72 (1986) 185–96. According to Green, Traversagni bases his treatment on the *Ad Herennium* ('a reworking of the *Ad Herennium* from an ecclesiatical point of view' 189) and Cicero's *De inventione*, not on Quintilian; and though Green does not discuss Erasmus' *Ecclesiastes*, he highlights a number of ideas in Traversagni's work and approach that also appear in Erasmus' treatment, such as the 'false dilemma,' the use of examples, deliberative and demonstrative oratory ('the only two *genera* which interest Traversagni' [188]), tropes, scholastics' mistakes in speaking (eg on division [190]), etc.

158 Even before Melanchthon the term *concionare* had been used for preaching; see the Franciscan handbook for preaching, erroneously ascribed to St Bonaventure, *Ars concionandi*, in *Opera omnia* Suppl. III (Trent: J.B. Monauni 1774) 385–417. Interestingly, the *Ars concionandi* borrows heavily from Cicero and Augustine (eg *De doctrina christiana* 4), which we discuss below. See Melanchthon's *De rhetorica libri tres* (Wittenberg: J. Grunenberg 1519) and (Basel: Johann Froben 1519). On 103–7 of the Froben edition he goes into the application of rhetoric to the matter of preaching (*De sacris concionibus*). Melanchthon followed this work up with

Melanchthon also published a treatise on theological commonplaces (*Loci communes theologici*,[159] which similarly positioned preaching squarely within the framework of classical rhetorical theory, though modifying the *genera* to fit the tasks he saw as essential to preaching. Melanchthon identified the preacher's primary duty as teaching, for which he invented the *genus didascalicum* (the genre for teaching),[160] a modification of the *ars recte docendi*, and the genre for teaching dialectics (*genus dialecticum*); he thought it crucial too that in teaching the preacher should move the affections.[161] To this Melanchthon added two other genres, the *epitrepticum* 'exhortation to believe' and the *paraeneticum* 'which urges moral reform,' both modifications of the classical *genus suasorium* (*deliberativum*) and all reflective of the genera given by St Paul.[162] Melanchthon's treatises find striking similarities in Erasmus' own method of fitting the classical *genera* to the specific tasks of the preacher as spelled out by St Paul in his Letter to the Romans and 2 Timothy (3:16–17 and 4:2), as we discuss below. As Erasmus' familiarity with Melanchthon's works suggests some debt to the

* * * * *

other treatises focused on preaching. For a complete list of Melanchthon's works on homiletics and modern editions of his works, see Uwe Schnell *Die homiletische Theorie Philipp Melanchthons* (Berlin and Hamburg 1968) 177–8, and 54–7 for background and analysis of Melanchthon's homiletic works and method. See also Mack *Renaissance Rhetoric* 104–22.

159 This treatise went into a second edition in 1535, a third edition in 1543, and a German edition in 1555. On Melanchthon's presentation of commonplaces, see Quirinus Breen 'The Terms "Loci Communes" and "Loci" in Melanchthon' *Church History* 16:4 (1947) 197–209; see too Lee A. Sonnino *A Handbook to Sixteenth-Century Rhetoric* (New York 1968); Sister Joan Marie Lechner *Renaissance Concepts of the Commonplaces: An Historical Investigation of the General and Universal Ideas Used in All Argumentation and Persuasion with Special Emphasis on the Educational and Literary Tradition of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York 1962). For Erasmus' knowledge of this work by Melanchthon and his final communications with Melanchthon, see Wengert. Wengert's article analyzes Melanchthon's subtle and cutting criticisms of Erasmus' *Ratio* and other writings.

160 See Schnell 39–44.

161 Schnell 87: 'Die Belehrung und die Bewirkung der Affekte sint nicht voneinander zu trennen. Sonst ist die Predigt fruchtlos und ohne geistlichen Nutzen für den Hörer.'

162 *De officiis concionatoris* (1529): 'Ex officiis concionatoris facile quod sint genera concionum colligi potest. Sunt enim haec tria, Didacticum, Epitrepticum, quod ad credendum: Paraeneticum, quod ad mores hortatur. Bona pars concionatorum solum hoc postremum genus tractat, quod qui sine fidei cognitione prosequuntur, tantum philosophantur, non tradunt Christi doctrinam . . .'

Reformer,[163] we might likewise assume that Melanchthon owed a sizeable debt to Erasmus as well.

In addition to theoretical works on classical and Christian discourse, Erasmus draws upon a wealth of personal experience of good and bad preaching, as his years of study and close observation allowed him to articulate what was in fact true sacred eloquence. His acquaintance with prelates and preachers throughout Europe, from his home monastery in Steyn to Utrecht, Paris, Rome, Canterbury, Oxford, Cambridge, Saint Omer, and elsewhere, furnished him with abundant memories of the good and poor preaching he had personally witnessed or heard about from others.[164] His familiarity with the ancient Greek and Latin poets, rhetoricians, and orators, above all Quintilian, Cicero, the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and especially, with the biblical sources, the Greek church Fathers of the first centuries – Origen, Basil, John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus – enabled him to judge the merits of public religious discourse. The ancients Erasmus regarded as unsurpassed: 'Those ancient masters,' Erasmus noted to Jacques Masson (Jacobus Latomus), 'like Cyprian, Ambrose, Augustine, Victorinus, and Jerome were all products of the rhetorical schools, not the philosophical academies of the Stoa or the Lycaeum.'[165] And there were outstanding preachers of his own time, whom Erasmus knew personally and held in the highest regard – Jean Vitrier, John Colet, John Fisher, William Warham, Henry Bullock, to name but a few.

Erasmus' reflections on the preaching he witnessed personally run throughout *Ecclesiastes*. He will refer to preachers who made a lasting im-

* * * * *

163 See Schnell 16–17; see also Grünwald 51–4 and Wengert 18 and passim. On the other hand Erasmus alludes to 2 Tim 3:16–17, 4:2 in *Ratio* 280: 'Quod si quis sibi permittit in his ludere nonnunquam, huic plus erit veniae in exhortando, in consolando, in reprehendendo quam in asserenda veritate.'

164 See eg book 3 CWE 68 950: 'What I shall report now I have neither read nor seen myself but learned from a thoroughly serious man who heard it in person. The location will be suppressed so as not to offend anyone too fastidious.' For Erasmus' esteem of one's qualifications to preach, see also letter to Wolfgang Faber Capito, Ep 541. See of course Erasmus' biting words about the English Franciscan Henry Standish, 'one of those who preach in public,' in his annotations on letter 6 (Jerome to Paulinus) *Vita Hieronymi* CWE 61 218–9.

165 *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* CWE 71 81. For Erasmus' view of the mischief Latomus (and Edward Lee) caused him, see his letter to Philippus Melanchthon (before 21 June 1520), Ep 1113. See also Marcel Gielis 'Leuven Theologians as Opponents of Erasmus and of Humanistic Theology' in *Biblical Humanism* 197–214, especially 202–3; Tracy (1) 834. See also *Vita Hieronymi* CWE 61 26 and 41–2 where Erasmus notes that Jerome refers to Gregory of Nazianzus as 'his teacher.'

pression on him, for better or worse. 'As a boy I heard a certain Dominican, endowed with an outstanding native grace of speech . . .'[166] 'I have heard some preachers who were already so close to obvious delirium that they were abandoned by their congregation in derision.'[167] 'I myself have heard someone who used the same exordium to preach everyday throughout the whole of Lent.'[168] '[A preacher] used a similar fiction to lay the final judgment before their eyes, for he was endowed with a certain natural eloquence. I listened to these things with a certain pleasure, but as a child.'[169] Other incidents he passes on as reports from trustworthy witnesses: 'What I shall report now I have neither read nor seen myself but learned from a thoroughly serious man who heard it in person.'[170] Erasmus gives us the sense of having been attentive to every word he heard preached, being always the critical listener as he was the writer.

In general Erasmus has little good to say about the generations of preachers after the age of Augustine. Nevertheless he admired some contemporaries, though omitting their names. We know however of one important model preacher, his friend Jean Vitrier, a Franciscan whose exemplary morality as a monk and excellence in preaching commanded Erasmus' esteem. Erasmus alludes to him in *Ecclesiastes*, and we know of him from Erasmus' edifying profile of the man in his letter to Justus Jonas (13 June 1521), written about the time he began to jot down ideas for *Ecclesiastes*. Of Vitrier he writes that 'every sentence he produced was full of Scripture, nor could he utter anything else. His heart was in what he said. He was absorbed by a kind of incredible passion for bringing men to the true philosophy of Christ, and from labours of this sort he hoped to win the glory of martyrdom.'[171] We have in fact evidence that Vitrier was the inspiration for Erasmus' comments in book 3 of *Ecclesiastes*, for in the second and third editions of the work his name appears in the index in reference to this passage.[172] Doubt-

* * * * *

166 See book 2 CWE 68 508.

167 Book 1 282

168 See book 2 CWE 68 510; cf *Ratio* 282: 'I heard a certain Paris theologian who dragged out for forty days [*quadraginta*] the parable of the prodigal son so he could square it with the number of Lent [*quadragesimae numerum*] . . .'

169 Book 3 CWE 68 862; cf *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 30–1.

170 Book 3 CWE 68 950

171 Letter to Justus Jonas (Anderlecht, 13 June 1521), Ep 1211:227

172 Chomarat believes that this 'someone of the same order' is the Franciscan Jean Vitrier (c 1456–before 15 June 1521); see ASD V-5 97 879n; see also Ep 1211:228. See especially Godin *Spiritualité*; CEBR III 408–9. Notably, this is the only instance in *Ecclesiastes* where Erasmus commends a Franciscan preacher.

less many other preachers Erasmus admired gave form to his work, though unfortunately they too remain anonymous.

Erasmus must have pondered often how a few individuals could preach so well while others failed miserably. How was it Jean Vitrier could speak 'as it were a continuous flow of language to connect the Epistle with the Gospel, so that his hearers went home not only better informed, but kindled with a new desire for a pious life'?[173] Erasmus admired the eloquence of certain Fathers of the church: What accounted for this? The question we might imagine had been begging an answer since his earliest years, and his experience of hearing many preachers – excellent and not – must have prodded him to inquire how one excelled in this most arduous of tasks, and how it was the Holy Spirit seemed to grace so few with true eloquence. Erasmus probes this question by considering the earthly ministry of 'the 'highest *concionator*,' Christ, whose divine nature and public life imparted to us a knowledge of God's expectations for future preachers, the nature of true eloquence, the theology of perfect communication, and the daunting training and personal holiness required to pursue this vocation worthily.

Ecclesiastes' theology of the word envisions Christ as mysteriously at work in the preacher's activity. Though the treatise does not advance deeply into the mechanics of how this happens, it places Christ as immediately – really, spiritually – present to all in the words and deeds of his human instrument, through whom he daily becomes reincarnated as the living word in God's ever continuing conversation (*sermo*) with humanity. In speaking God's word, the preacher is assisted by the Holy Spirit[174] as it was of old when God's Spirit mysteriously guided the words of the prophets and

* * * * *

For Erasmus' profile of Jean Vitrier, see Ep 1211:1–273. Vitrier's name appears in the index of the edition of *Ecclesiastes* published by H. Froben and N. Episcopius (August 1536), which would confirm Erasmus' attribution of these words to Vitrier. See also Kleinhans 153 n6 and Appendix B (165–7).

173 Letter to Justus Jonas (Anderlecht, 13 June 1521), Ep 1211:65–7. Cf Cicero *De oratore* 1.2–6.

174 Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 177 a 1: 'Now the knowledge a man receives from God cannot be turned to another's profit, except by means of speech. And since the Holy Ghost does not fail in anything that pertains to the profit of the church, he provides also the members of the church with speech; to the effect that a man not only speaks so as to be understood by different people, which pertains to the gift of tongues, but also speaks with effect, and this pertains to the grace 'of the word."' See *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 177 a 1 where he takes up prophecy under the general consideration of gratuitous graces.

apostles.[175] How this actually comes about Erasmus explains by saying that 'the person who is speaking is a man like you; but God is speaking to you through his mouth, and he is speaking God's words, not his own.'[176] Erasmus' statements beg clarification, but they consistently get at the idea formulated by Thomas Aquinas that 'the Holy Spirit makes use of the human tongue as an instrument, but it is he who perfects the work within us.'[177] Erasmus amplifies this by affirming that 'the tongue of the orator can be effective only if Christ's spirit inhabits his heart, moves the plectrum of his mouth, and imparts mystical force to the words that flow forth. The voice of the orator can strike the ears of his audience, but it is God alone who transforms their minds with secret inspiration.'[178] Nonetheless, even with a preacher's superhuman efforts there is no divine guarantee of spiritual change in hearers, for to each hearer is given the freedom to receive or reject God's word.[179] Though *Ecclesiastes* bypasses the question of the role of free will, we might well assume that Erasmus' thinking on this issue falls in line with his position in *De libero arbitrio* (1524), *Hyperaspistes* 1 (1526) and 2 (1527) that free will is somehow present in the listener and 'God does not withhold his grace from those doing what they can';[180] but at this moment in his life, revisiting this disputed question was

* * * * *

175 For the idea of 'inspiration' in biblical and patristic thought, see eg the article by Richard F. Smith 'Inspiration and Inerrancy' JBC II 499–514. For inspiration in the *artes praedicandi*, see Franco Morenzoni 'Parole du prédicateur et inspiration divine d'après les *artes praedicandi*' in *Parole du prédicateur* I 271–90.

176 Book 1 441

177 *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 177 a 1

178 Book 1 259; cf Rom 10:17 and Acts 20:32; *Paraphrasis in Acta* CWE 50 125; see especially *De concordia* CWE 65 152.

179 Erasmus does not explicitly take up the role of grace and human cooperation in *Ecclesiastes*, but one finds his thinking on this in his controversy with Luther; see *De libero arbitrio* (1524) CWE 76, and *Hyperaspistes* 1 (1526), and *Hyperaspistes* 2 (1527) CWE 76–7. Erasmus opened up the debate by responding to Article 36 of Luther's *Assertion of All the Articles of Martin Luther Which Were Quite Recently Condemned by a Bull of Leo X* (after 10 December 1520). Article 36 is found in CWE 76 301–9. In December 1525, Luther replied to Erasmus' first work with *The Enslaved Will* (*De servo arbitrio*), to which Erasmus responded with *Hyperaspistes* 1 & 2. See CWE 76 and 77, and Charles Trinkaus' introduction to these works in CWE 76 xi–cvi. See also Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle 'Erasmus and the "Modern" Question: Was He Semi-Pelagian?' *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 75 (1984) 59–77; her analysis situates Erasmus' ideas on grace and free will within the rhetorical genre of the diatribe and refutes the opinion that Erasmus was a semi-Pelagian.

180 See Charles Trinkaus' introduction *Hyperaspistes* 1 & 2 CWE 76 xi–106, espe-

better left for another time.[181] Erasmus, however, is ever insistent that the preacher should not expect the power of the Holy Spirit to be so compelling that he need do nothing more. On the contrary, he must 'strive without pause, planting and watering and asking Christ's Spirit to give increase,[182] in short imitating that highest preacher in everything so far as his strength allows.'[183]

Christ promised his assistance to those he called to preach his word, but still the challenges of the office far surpassed those of any other. Like his dedicatory letter to von Stadion where Erasmus confesses having found nothing more difficult than writing this work, he similarly envisioned the preacher's instruction, toil, and commitment to the task as daunting and lifelong. Echoing Quintilian, he declares that 'among all the functions of human life none is more serious, none more noble, and none more dangerous than that of the preacher.[184] If you are wondering whence he has been sent, it is from that prince who created, sustains, and guides the universe; if you are wondering what his mission is, it is to teach his people the heavenly philosophy.'[185] Though Erasmus had only preached once or twice, he fully understood the momentous importance of oratorical rhetoric for the church, and perhaps even wished he had the natural disposition for public speaking and the calling to be a preacher.[186] In fact, as an *obiter dictum* in book 1 Erasmus expresses this sentiment in a poignant, personal way: 'That to which we urge you is difficult, but it is also the most beautiful and excellent enterprise of all; would that the Lord had given me such a spirit that I could earn death in so pious an activity rather than be consumed by a slow death

* * * * *

cially xciii–civ; see also 575: 'It is better ... to take a middle position than either to attribute nothing to our natural proclivity or else to attribute more to it than any pious person can tolerate.'

181 See Schoeck (2) 353–4.

182 Cf 1 Cor 3:6–8 and Matt 9:37–8. See Tracy (1) 24.

183 Book 1 259. Throughout *Ecclesiastes* Erasmus does not ask readers to imitate the great preachers in Christian tradition but urges them to imitate Christ, 'that highest Preacher in everything.'

184 For an illustration of the dangers to good preachers, see Erasmus' account of the near murder of Jean Vitrier in his letter to Justus Jonas (Anderlecht, 13 June 1521), Ep 1211:77–104; see also Taylor *Soldiers* and Larissa Taylor 'Dangerous Vocations: Preaching in France in the Late Middle Ages and Reformations' in *Preachers and People in the Reformations and Early Modern Period* ed Larissa Taylor (Leiden and Boston 2001) 91–124.

185 Book 1 330

186 For Erasmus' description of the physical torments he suffered while finishing *Ecclesiastes*, see Schoeck (2) 340–2.

in my present torments.'[187] 'The office of preacher, then, is very difficult,' one should expect, 'but also very beautiful; the contest is no ordinary one, but the prizes are outstanding.'[188]

Even with the Holy Spirit's assistance Erasmus envisions the instruction of the preacher as lengthy and arduous. Interestingly he sees the beginnings of a true reform of preaching in reversing society's negative judgment of the preacher and his profession, and in the preacher's diligent appropriation of those qualities that will lend him credibility. For this it is necessary first of all to correct the 'foolish judgments'[189] of the world (*mundus*), above all the judgments of those who should preach, by urging them to understand that 'foolish judgments, not only here but in pretty much every part of life, are the springs from which gushes all moral decay.'[190] The good preacher must first secure favour and authority, which can only happen by returning to the original simplicity of Christ, Paul, and the apostles, for only then will the world take notice of the sublime message presented; and at this the people will return to their original generosity. The preacher must embody the simplicity and interior sentiments of his conformity to Christ who inhabits his heart and follow the words and example of Paul, who instructs each Christian to 'keep himself from every appearance of evil, so as not to incur the suspicion of wrong in any regard';[191] for it is good example more than anything else that stimulates others to the pursuit of godliness. At the same time, it is vital that the preacher instruct his flock in the spiritual significance of his office and urge its cooperation in reversing their perception of preaching's fallen status. The reform of preaching, in effect, begins with the preacher himself, who with God's grace embarks upon the reformation of his own life, exercises himself in godliness (cf 1 Tim 4:7–8), and comes to understand the nature of his office that is 'more truly angelic than human.'[192] With this the preacher's audience will change its opinions, and

* * * * *

187 Book 1 364; cf *Adagia* II i 12 *Difficilia quae pulchra* 'Good things are difficult'; and *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 21.

188 Book 1 365

189 Book 1 404; see also the idea that foolish judgments 'in pretty much every part of life' lead to moral decay in *Moria* CWE 27 77–153.

190 Book 1 404; cf letter to Paul Volz, Ep 858:86: 'Nor is it easy to express what a decay in moral standards stems from topsy-turvy judgments like this'; and *Enchiridion* CWE 66 85: 'So Socrates in his discussion with Protagoras proves that knowledge has so great an importance in all virtue that sins arise solely from false opinions.'

191 See book 1 270; cf 1 Thess 5:22.

192 See book 1 327; cf 1 Tim 4:7–8 and *Enchiridion* CWE 66 78.

the preacher's credibility and effectiveness in the assembly of Christians will take hold.

Significant are Erasmus' choices of the terms *ecclesiastes* (*concionator*) for the preacher and *concio* (*contio*)[193] for his sacred discourse. The title of the work signals at the outset the central importance of public preaching in the life of the church and, as we shall see, in God's providential plan for our salvation.[194] Following St Jerome's commentary on the book of Ecclesiastes,[195] Erasmus informs us that '*ecclesia* means in Greek what *concio* does in Latin, that is, an assembling of the people to hear about state business'[196] or matters of the highest importance. 'The church (*ecclesia*) is called

* * * * *

193 The standard orthography of the word is *contio*; see L&S 451: '*contio* (less correctly *concio*).' Cf OLD 474 *contio*.

194 The idea that preaching was a public event is well established; see eg Alan of Lille 16: 'Preaching is an open and public instruction in faith and behavior, whose purpose is the forming of men . . .'

195 Jerome *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten* CCSL 72 247–361; see 250: 'I.1. *Verba Ecclesiastis filii David Regis Ierusalem*. Tribus nominibus vocatum fuisse Salomonem scripturae manifestissime docent: pacificum, id est Salomonem; et Ididia, hoc est dilectum Domini; et quod nunc dicitur Coeleth, id est Ecclesiasten. Ecclesiastes autem graeco sermone appelatur, qui coetum, id est ecclesiam, congreget, quem nos nuncupare possumus concionatorem, quod loquatur ad populum, et sermo eius non specialiter ad unum, sed ad universos generaliter dirigatur.'

196 Book 1 249–52. The word *concio* (*contio*) properly refers to the assembly called by an official to hear about state business, and the word takes on the meaning of the address spoken before that assembly. Erasmus purposely elects the Latin word *concio* rather than the common alternatives (*sermo*, *oratio*, *praedicatio, homilia*) to emphasize the public nature of preaching like its secular counterpart, where one 'speaks to an assembly' (*ecclesia* or *concio*) about matters of 'state business.' Erasmus can substitute *concio* for *ecclesia*; see eg *Credo sanctam ecclesiam*: 'Et te confiteor, sanctissima concio, qua gens / Christigena arcano nexu coit omnis in unum / Corpus & unanimis capiti sociatur Iësu, / Hinc proprium nescit, sed habet communia cuncta.' *Christiani hominis institutum* LB V 1357E–F, quoted by Wilhelm Hentze *Kirche und kirchliche Einheit bei Desiderius Erasmus von Rotterdam* (Paderborn 1974) 2 n215. At Rome the term is used for a meeting called by a priest or a magistrate to hear an issue of common interest; *contionem habere* means 'to hold a meeting'; see L&S 451. But it can also refer to the oration given in such a meeting; see eg Cicero *De lege agraria* II 1.1 and 5.13. For the *contio* in the Roman world, see Lily Ross Taylor, *Roman Voting Assemblies from the Hannibalic War to the Dictatorship of Caesar* (Ann Arbor 1966). The Greek word *ecclesia* (Greek ἐκκλησία) meaning 'assembly' was used by the translators of the Septuagint to render the Hebrew word *qāhal* (קהל). Chomarat (*Grammaire* II 1102) notes that

a congregation (*congregatio*) or assembly (*concio*) which comes together to hear the word of God.'[197] The preacher, *concionator* or *ecclesiastes*, ἐκκλησιαστής (*ekklêsiastês*), like the Hebrew *qohelet* קהלת, is the man who addresses the *ecclesia* or ἐκκλησία (Hebrew *qahal*, קהל).[198] His counterpart in the external secular world is the ambassador (*orator* or ἐκκλησιαστής) of his prince who performs a similar function in 'pleading publicly before a crowd.' Indeed, the fundamental meaning of *concionare* or ἐκκλησιάζειν (*ekklêsiazein*) is 'to speak to the assembly.' The term *concio* is therefore not descriptive of the form or genre of the *ecclesiastes*' discourse but simply comes to mean the words delivered by the *concionator* at a public assembly (*in concione publica*).[199]

Because *Ecclesiastes* centres on the method of addressing the Christian assembly (*de ratione concionandi*), we should infer that the setting is generally a liturgical one, but not exclusively, for *contiones* could take place at various occasions outside the liturgy, and Erasmus recalls the commonplace that 'it befits the preacher to talk about Christ everywhere, not just in a church.'[200]

* * * * *

in this way the Greek word 'assembly' was Latinized to *ecclesia* to mean 'the church.'

197 Book 2 CWE 68 695: 'Ecclesia dicitur congregatio sive concio, quae convenit ad audiendum verbum Dei.'

198 See Jerome *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum* CCSL 72 155: 'Clemens ecclesiastes sive concionator.' See too Augustine *Sermon 164*, *Sermons* WSA III 189: 'Delivering an address to the whole world from the platform, so to say, of his sublime authority, he cries out, "Listen, human race ..."' PL 38 896; (*concionator mundi, de quadam specula excelsae auctoritatis exclamat: audi, genus humanum*).

199 In the opening words of his commentary on the book of Ecclesiastes, St Jerome points out the meaning of the term *concio* (*contio*), as does Lorenzo Valla in his *Elegantiae* (1444). Erasmus includes this term in his *Paraphrasis in Elegantias Vallae*; see ASD I-4 238: 'Concio primo est congregatio multitudinis ad audiendum concionantem oratorem. Graeci concionem, id est conventum populi ἐκκλησίαν vocant. Secundo est oratio habita ad populum. Ubi fuisti? In concione.' Valla's work was reprinted in Basel in 1540. Erasmus had also employed the term for the discourse he wrote for John Colet's new school at St Paul's Cathedral in London and used it in his *Ratio*. O'Malley reviews Erasmus' use of this term in 'Sacred Rhetoric' 14–16. Sometime around 1510, Erasmus uses the term in his *Concio de puero Iesu*, translated as *Homily on the Child Jesus* (CWE 29 51–70), and in his *Concio de immensa Dei misericordia* of 1524 (CWE 70 69–139). Cicero often uses the term *contio* to mean the speeches given in an assembly; see eg *Ad Atticum* 2.20: 'Bibulus hominum admiratione et benevolentia in caelo est; edicta eius et contiones describunt et legunt.'

200 See book 3 CWE 68 883.

He refers, for example, to Peter's speech on Pentecost (Acts 2) as a *contio*, and indeed Erasmus labels some of his own compositions for special occasions as *conciones*.[201] Often he uses other Latin terms to convey the duty of speaking before the people, such as *praedicatio*, *praedicare*, *praedicator*, as these traditional words also aptly depict the public performative aspect of Christian preaching. Though often employing a variety of terms to describe the sacred discourse, such as homily (*homilia*), sermon (*sermo*), oration (*oratio*), panegyric (*laudatio*), he selects chiefly the words *concio*, *concionare*, *ecclesiastes*, and *concionator* to indicate that it is to the public assembly of Christians that the preacher addresses his words.[202]

Erasmus envisions the Christian assembly as a congregation comprised of all manner of individuals, from all backgrounds, and with varying levels of education, intellectual abilities, and moral worth. These Christ came to teach, a task fraught with enormous difficulty for any preacher. Although Erasmus recognizes the wide variety of individuals in a Christian assembly, he often views it in pejorative terms – as 'an untrained crowd inclined to yawn' or as 'souls ... rotting in sin as though in a tomb.'[203] The same might be said for his own view of Christian society; his comments suggest a world teeming with vice and sinfulness, and daily growing more alienated from God: 'But before whom does the preacher have to speak? I'm not

* * * * *

201 We have no *conciones* Erasmus delivered. His *Concio de puero Iesu* (*Homily on the Child Jesus*) (1511) was certainly a production of this kind, as were *Concio de immensa Dei misericordia* (1524), *In psalmum quartum concio* (1525; CWE 63), (*Concio*) for the *Virginis matris apud Lauretum cultae liturgia* (CWE 69), and *Concionalis interpretatio in psalmum 85* (1528; CWE 64). Though Erasmus never delivered any of these *conciones* or *conciunculae*, he constructed them with an imaginary audience in mind; they are addressed to 'brothers' and 'sisters' as if an audience were present. See O'Malley's discussion of this in 'Grammar' 90–3. Cynthia L. Polecritti gives a good picture of Bernardino da Siena's sermons after mass; see her *Preaching Peace in Renaissance Italy: Bernardino of Siena and His Audience* (Washington, DC 2000) chapter 1 'The Preacher and the Crowd' 67–83.

202 The Latin word *concio* (*contio*), with all its particular nuances for understanding this treatise, presents problems in English translation. There is no felicitous equivalent in our vocabulary to render *concio* in a way that would be true to Erasmus' linguistic and theological understanding. Lewis and Short (L&S 451) defines *contio* as 'a discourse, oration before a public assembly,' which gives only minimal help in expressing the idea of preaching to the congregation of the faithful as the bishop's principal duty; cf OLD 474–5 SV *contio*. Our decision therefore has been to render *concio* generally as 'sermon,' which here signals sacred public oratory, more commonly in a liturgical setting.

203 Book 3 CWE 68 773; book 1 396

talking now about a crowd of villagers and farmers but about a civic assembly with an indiscriminate mix of children, elders, maidens and whores, sailors, drivers, and shoemakers, among whom some are not much different from livestock so far as the capacity to be taught is concerned.'[204] And how might one's message touch all these persons of such diverse status, intelligence, and spiritual condition?[205] Erasmus has little to say about this;[206] yet he often emphasizes that the preacher does not address the spiritual elite to the neglect of the others, for it is the special universal character of a Christian assembly that no individual should be excluded from hearing God's word. This is all the more reason why the preacher, like Christ, must know how to accommodate his speech to everyone; and if done successfully, it effects marvellous social benefits: order, obedience, respect for the laws, domestic harmony, trust, honesty, chaste behaviour, alacrity in performing one's chores, upright commerce.[207] Good preaching brings about true social and spiritual reform.

If Quintilian and the other pagan authorities of antiquity maintained that the task of the orator was the most difficult of all, Erasmus takes this further, asserting that the task of the Christian preacher was incalculably greater than the pagans could ever have imagined, for nothing could be more challenging than calling sinners to their senses, bringing them to see their sinfulness and ingratitude to God, whose infinite love and goodness to humanity are beyond comprehension. If the duty of the Roman orator was arduous, how much more could this be said of the Christian preacher? In a world of folly and spiritual blindness, where 'in every class of men there are more bad than good' and 'every people is a beast of many heads,'[208] the challenge of calling humanity to godliness was never more difficult. It was therefore crucial that preachers have adamantine resolve and courage, for people may not be drawn to the good by clear, simple, and pure teaching; more realistically it is often necessary to awaken them from their moral

* * * * *

204 Book 3 CWE 68 791–2. Erasmus also often uses the word 'people' (*populus*) for the assembly of Christians listening to the preacher; see eg book 3 CWE 68 811.

205 For Erasmus' view of society as teeming with vice, see his letter to Paul Volz (Basel, 14 August 1518), Ep 858:166–90, 175–7: 'Is there any religious man who does not see with sorrow that this generation is far the most corrupt there has ever been?'; and Tracy (1) 87–103.

206 On this question see Murphy *Rhetoric* 284–97.

207 Dedicatory letter to Christoph von Stadion (246)

208 Book 1 267; cf Horace *Epistles* 1.1.76. Erasmus changes Horace's line from 'You are a beast of many heads' (*Belua multorum es capitum*) to '[Every people] is a beast of many heads.'

lethargy with stinging rebukes and by denouncing their vices. Erasmus in fact urges preachers, whenever appropriate, to dedicate a substantial part of their *concio* to attacking the vices prevalent in the community, and he sees the preacher's vocation as so profoundly dangerous precisely because of the wicked resistance of his hearers and the divine imperative to correct this.[209] Much of *Ecclesiastes* in fact centres on the moral reformation of society, which must start with the eradication of vices before virtue can be engendered, and the task as Erasmus saw it was more formidable in his age than ever. In comparing his world with that of John Chrysostom (another prominent *ecclesiastes* with a burning zeal to reform his vicious world), Erasmus utters the wish, 'If only the violence of princes, the rebelliousness of clerics, the insensibility of the people, the uproar of heresies were less today!'[210] No preacher should expect an easy life in this dangerous vocation.[211] *Ecclesiastes* in fact offers no words about bright prospects for a stable Christian peace, general tranquillity, and the cultivation of *bonae litterae*. In Erasmus' eyes, by the 1530s princes and bishops together, whose role it was to safeguard the Lord's vineyard for the cultivation of godliness, had so abandoned it that it was 'now almost destroyed.'[212] No doubt Erasmus' perception of his society's present moral abyss prompted him to impress upon the preacher the extreme difficulty he must expect in addressing Christian men and women and 'in trying to please all men in everything . . . that they may be saved' (1 Cor 10:33).

Erasmus often uses terms other than *ecclesiastes* for the agents of this exalted ministry and for their message, such as 'heralds of evangelical philosophy' (*evangelicae philosophiae praecones*), 'teachers of heavenly wisdom' (*coelestis philosophiae doctores*), 'ambassadors' (*oratores*), 'evangelical preacher' (*concionator evangelicus*);[213] frequently too he refers to preachers as 'pastors' (*pastores*). Whatever terms used, it becomes evident early in book 1 that the

* * * * *

209 Book 1 330; cf Wenzel 'Preaching' passim.

210 Book 1 350

211 On the dangerous nature of the preacher's vocation, see eg Taylor *Soldiers* and her 'Dangerous Vocations: Preaching in France in the Late Middle Ages and Reformations.'

212 Book 1 370; cf *Ratio* 252: 'Annotandum interim et illud, quod Christus ubique fere miseretur turbae simplicis, in solos Pharisaeos, scribas et divites vae formidabile intonat, videlicet indicans in episcopis, theologis ac principibus esse situm, ut populi vigeat aut frigeat pietas. Ab illis omne malum oritur.'

213 Book 1 430, 309, 336; see also book 1 439: 'heralds of the word of salvation' (*Verbi salutiferi praeconibus*).

preacher (*ecclesiastes*) he envisions is first and foremost the bishop (*episcopus*) and by extension those to whom he delegates his pastoral authority. To the bishop-pastor belongs eminently the office of feeding – or teaching – the flock of Christians. He is the *ecclesiastes* in full, and all other sacred orators – pastors and others lawfully delegated – derive their authority and license exclusively from him. It is therefore the bishop's chief duty (*munus praecipuum*) to teach[214] and to move each one's heart to godliness. What the congregation hears from the dutiful bishop who 'expounds the edicts, promises, and will of the highest prince and persuades the people at large'[215] is nothing other than 'the evangelical philosophy,' those mysteries of the divine mind that have to do with our salvation.[216]

Erasmus' teacher-bishop (*ecclesiastes*) functions as the crucial link carrying on the earthly ministry of Christ, the Word (*sermo*) of the omnipotent God.[217] After Christ's ascension and visible departure, he serves as his representative, revealing to us the will of the Father that all human beings are to be enlightened in the truth, joined together into Christ's body, and united with the Father and Spirit to live as one people in perfect concord of hearts and minds.[218] Erasmus is emphatic that the bishop's teaching is altogether different from scholastic disputations and university lectures: 'However ingenious Duns Scotus' teachings about metaphysics, what do they have to do with the preacher?'[219] Nor should the 'subtleties of scholastic theologians,

* * * * *

214 See Tanner II 669, Council of Trent, Session 5, Decretum Secundum: super lectione et praedicatione: 'hoc est praecipuum episcoporum munus . . .'

215 Book 1 251

216 Cf letter to Paul Volz (14 August 1518), Ep 858:219–24.

217 Erasmus makes clear the restorative role of Christ: his word repairs, reintegrates, and recreates what had been lost through Adam's sin and human sinfulness. God's word 'flows forth eternally without beginning, without end from the eternal heart of the Father; through it the Father created the universe, through it he rules all creation, through it he restored the fallen human race, through it he bound the church to himself, through it he desired to become known to the world in a singular and ineffable manner . . .' (book 1 255). See also Ep 384:21–35, and Erasmus' words on bishops and their authority in *De esu carnium* ASD IX-1 38–42; and Augustijn *Erasmus* 149.

218 On St Jerome's authority Erasmus informs us that the 'spiritual reading' of the name *ecclesiastes* means that 'the pacific and beloved of God the Father and our *ecclesiastes* is Christ.' Jerome *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten* CCSL 72 251.

219 Book 2 CWE 68 482. From 1495–1500, during his years in Paris, Erasmus attended lectures on Scotus' theology at the Franciscan *studium*, and it appears it was then he conceived the idea of a new kind of theology that would bring the

who use various sophistries to dispute how the persons [of the Trinity] differ among themselves . . . be presented to the congregation.'[220] The bishop's *concio* on the other hand 'embraces both sound doctrine and the admonition, rebuke, consolation, and refutation of those who carp at the truth of the gospel' (cf 2 Tim 3:16–17, 4:2).[221] A further difference between the preacher-bishop and the scholastic theologian is that the preacher speaking before the congregation of the faithful is the true theologian,[222] for he instructs hearers in 'that ineffable philosophy which the Son of God brought to earth from the bosom of his Father.'[223] He carries on Jesus' earthly ministry in simple and sincere speech. Notable examples of worthy prelates in this mission are Gregory the Great (pontificate 590–604), who despite his innumerable responsibilities as pope 'preached before the people, sometimes several times a day,'[224] Basil (330–79), John Chrysostom (347–407), and Augustine (354–432). In teaching the heavenly philosophy, they followed the Lord Jesus, 'the perfect evangelist,' 'the teacher of all teachers.'[225] They embodied the excellence of true bishops who 'promoted in every way what contributes to godliness (*pietas*).'[226]

The exalted function of the preacher-bishop stands out even more strikingly in the ministry of Christ, the one on whose behalf he speaks. In his earthly activity Jesus revealed to us the presence of the eternal Word from before the beginning of creation until the consummation of the world, when all will be in all. As the 'power and wisdom of God,'[227] the supreme teacher brought 'the heavenly philosophy' to enlighten the minds of all people who

* * * * *

message of the gospel of Christ to Christians in their daily lives. See *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 227–31 n190; cf *Ratio* 298–301.

220 See book 4 CWE 68 1078; cf letter to Paul Volz, Ep 858:35–119, and Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 2.31.48; *Moria* CWE 27 132–5; and *Ratio* 297–8.

221 Book 1 402–3

222 Cf *Paraclesis* in Olin 145.

223 Book 1 320

224 Book 1 355; on Augustine's exemplary life as bishop, see the letter to Alonso de Fonseca (Freiburg, [May] 1529), Ep 2157:74–82.

225 Book 1 418, 321; cf *Paraclesis* in Olin 95: 'He alone was a teacher who came forth from heaven, he alone could teach certain doctrine, since it is eternal wisdom, he alone, the sole author of human salvation, taught what pertains to salvation, he alone fully vouches for whatsoever he taught, he alone is able to grant whatsoever he has promised.'

226 Book 3 CWE 68 859

227 Cf 1 Cor 1:24.

would believe in him and thereby be saved.[228] Christ is the 'highest *ecclesiastes*,' 'that incomprehensible Word [*sermo*], the surest expounder [*enarrator*] of the divine mind and never in conflict with the model of perfect truth . . .'[229] It is Christ 'who is never named more splendidly or more meaningfully in Holy Writ than when he is called the Word or Speech of God (*verbum sive sermo Dei*),'[230] for he mediates the mind of God through his continuous conversation with humanity.

Christ the *logos*, 'the way, the truth, and life,'[231] is the only model the preacher needs to imitate. He embodies eminently all precepts of the ancient writers on rhetoric, for as 'teacher of all teachers' he knew perfectly how to accommodate the divine word in different ways to persons of all stations in life.[232] His singular excellence was teaching (*docere*) us how everything spoken of or done in the Old Testament prefigured himself, the mediator of the heavenly philosophy, to instruct people towards godliness. As Erasmus states in *Paraclesis*, this philosophy was none other 'than the restoration of human nature originally well formed.'[233] Everywhere Christ went he went as teacher; whether sitting at the banquets of the Pharisees, in houses, on the mountain tops, in boats, Christ always taught by explaining to us through parables and allegories what had been foretold about him and our relationship through him with the Father. As mediator he spent his life recalling wayward humanity to the truth, which he himself was, and reversing the deceit of Satan, whose speech 'led the human race astray.'[234] Though Quintilian and the pagan rhetoricians had ably identified the rhetorical elements of persuasive speech, none of the pagans could ever have imagined that the perfect orator they idealized would be God's own Word made flesh, whose words by comparison rendered lifeless every artifice of human discourse.

* * * * *

228 Cf Ep 858:347–8: 'And there is only one goal: Christ, and his teaching in all its purity.'

229 Book 1 256

230 John 1:1. Book 1 253; Erasmus uses both terms for the 'Word of God.' See eg book 1 258: 'the highest orator, who was called the Word, that is, the image and voice, of God.' See *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 13–21 and *Enchiridion* CWE 66 72. See also Kleinhans 102–6.

231 John 14:6: 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life.'

232 Cf *Paraclesis* in Olin 96: 'This doctrine in an equal degree accommodates itself to all, lowers itself to the little ones, adjusts itself to their measure, nourishing them with milk, bearing, fostering, sustaining them, doing everything until we grow in Christ . . .'

233 *Paraclesis* in Olin 100

234 Book 1 259

Imparting an understanding of divine law was another crucial aspect of Jesus' mission that Erasmus places at the core of the preacher-bishop's ministry.[235] Law is nothing less than the expression of the eternal immutable will and mind of God, which all creation should hold dearest. In fact, Christ himself is the perfect expression of this law, and he came to us as ambassador of the Father to reveal it to us in its fullness. Erasmus announces this idea at the opening of *Ecclesiastes*, telling us that the sacred *ecclesiastes* 'expounds the edicts, promises, and will of the highest prince.'[236] The importance of order and the Law upholding it are paramount in Erasmus' thinking, as right order is crucial to peace, concord, and godliness.[237] The divine law moreover extends throughout all strata of creation, maintaining the salvific course of God's wisdom through every phase of human history from the time of Adam to the Second Coming of Christ. This law 'has been displayed in a variety of ways, taking account of differences in times and persons':[238] in dealing with human beings, God divided his communication of the Law into four major phases – '[man's] creation, his fall, his restitution, and his perfection.'[239] In moving from phase to phase, God's law remained ever fixed and immutable, though in the course of the history of our salvation the law was expressed and taught to us in different ways; hence humankind does not discard God's law in passing from one phase to the next, but learns in each new phase the deeper significance of God's teachings in light of what went before.

The crucial importance of God's law is further made clear in his providential plan for humanity's salvation. From the fall of Adam until the Law

* * * * *

235 See C. Douglas McCullough 'The Concept of Law in the Thought of Erasmus' ERSY 1 (1981) 89–112. This idea is also at the centre of the Council of Trent's decree on bishops; see Tanner II 763, Council of Trent, Session 24, Canon 4: 'Bishops are to announce the sacred scripture and the law of God in their own church . . .' See also Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 156–62 and J.B. Payne *Erasmus: His Theology of the Sacraments* (Richmond 1970).

236 Book 1 251

237 On the conception of God's orderly creation, see also Philippus Melanchthon's discussion of Creation (Locus 2) in his *Loci communes*; see Philippus Melanchthon, *Heubtartikel Christlicher Lere: Melanchthons deutsche Fassung seiner* Loci theologici, *nach dem Autograph und dem Originaldruck von 1553* ed Ralf Jenett and Johannes Schilling (Leipzig 2002) 127–38 Cf Cicero *De legibus* 2.4.8–11.

238 Book 4 CWE 68 1031

239 See book 4 CWE 68 1031. Erasmus maintains that in this life no one reaches perfection, but each individual must strive; see *Ratio* 195: 'Nihil in rebus humanis vere perfectum, verum in suo cuique statu perfectionis studium adesse debet.

was given to Moses, the human race – including the many pagans living outside the Mosaic law – had some comprehension of the divine law as it was lived according to the law of nature; as Erasmus put it in *Hyperaspistes*, the Law was 'so deeply rooted in the mind of men, that even the pagans draw this conclusion: God is highly righteous and good';[240] and there were pagans of such natural virtue that they could with the light of reason understand the law God embedded within the natural order.[241] They grasped a considerable amount of the Law even without revelation, but little could they have imagined the New Law Christ would bring with the stupendous news of its insurmountable benefits to mankind, most of all the wondrous enjoyment of concord in the members of his body.

With Moses God gave the Law to Israel 'to show explicitly what was wrong, what right, and to use punishment to deter from the former, rewards to encourage proper behaviour.'[242] Until the time of Christ the Law had been the teacher, for whatever was written in the Old Testament was written to teach us about Christ.[243] Through the precepts of the Law, in shadows and veiled speech, and through the ministry of the ancient prophets, God slowly unfolded his plan over the ages until the time of John the Baptist, who,

* * * * *

240 *Hyperaspistes* 1 CWE 76 272–3; *Hyperaspistes* 2 CWE 77 737–8

241 See especially Erasmus' expression of this idea in *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 192–4.

242 Book 4 CWE 68 1032. The themes of vices and virtues, punishment and reward (or glory) lay at the heart of medieval preaching, especially that of the Franciscans. Erasmus notes that 'Glory could be subsumed under the heading of reward . . .' (book 2 CWE 68 569). See chapter 9 of *The Later Rule* of St Francis, which uses 'glory' instead of 'reward,' in *Francis of Assisi* 1 104–5: 'Moreover, I admonish and exhort those brothers that when they preach their language be well considered and chaste for the benefit and edification of the people, announcing to them vices and virtues, punishment and glory, with brevity, because our Lord when on earth kept his word brief.' (105) See also Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 6 a 1 rep obj 1: 'Fear of God cannot altogether precede faith, because if we knew nothing at all about him, with regard to rewards and punishments, concerning which faith teaches us, we should nowise fear him. If, however, faith be presupposed in reference to certain articles of faith, for example the divine excellence, then reverential fear follows, the result of which is that man submits his intellect to God, so as to believe in all the divine promises. Hence the text quoted continues: "And your reward shall not be made void."' Cf Plutarch *De liberis educandis* 12C–D.

243 See *Ratio* 210: 'Quemadmodum enim nihil gessit Christus, quod non adumbratum sit typis legis, quod non praedictum prophetarum oraculis, ita nihil factum est memorabile, quod non ante praedixerit apostolis suis, de morte sua . . .'

standing at midpoint between the Old Law and the New, revealed to us the true light who enlightens every man coming into this world.[244] He disclosed to us Christ, the bringer of the heavenly philosophy, who baptized in fire and the Spirit, revealing at last God's New Law for our eternal blessedness. Becoming flesh among us, 'the perfect evangelist'[245] everywhere and at all times left 'memorials of his love and the seeds of the evangelical philosophy.'[246] His mission was to teach by leading us forth from the letter to the spirit, from 'shadows ... to the gleaming light of evangelical devotion'[247] and the perfection of the New Law.

As 'teacher of all teachers,'[248] Christ continually taught persons of every status and spiritual condition, and he actually spent the greater part of his ministry instructing his disciples, who would succeed him in his role as teacher. Little by little (*paulatim*), by word and example, he made known to them how they were to continue his ministry after his death and resurrection, for they and their successors would be to the men and women of their generations what Christ had been to them.[249] Slow learners that they were, they 'offered very attentive ears to Christ,'[250] all the while never grasping fully the sublime significance of his message until after his ascension when his Spirit opened their eyes at Pentecost, enlightened their minds, and bestowed upon them the power to proclaim and teach what they had heard and witnessed. Because of the slow pace of human understanding, the apostles and their successors would teach as Christ taught, knowing the right times and places for imparting truth, as Gregory of Nazianzus attests; 'In heavenly philosophy the most convenient method of teaching is if the highest things are not revealed immediately, but instead the listeners are led towards complete knowledge through distinct stages.'[251] Hearers of the word would be brought slowly to understand how God's eternal law has functioned throughout history and how under the New Law all persons of the earth have the chance to become members of Christ's body and share in the fellowship of the Trinity. Christ's example therefore provides the clearest

* * * * *

244 John 1:9; cf *Paraphrasis in Marcum* CWE 49 14–8.
245 Book 1 418
246 Book 3 CWE 68 881
247 Book 2 CWE 68 683
248 Book 1 321
249 On this motif of 'little by little' (*paulatim*) in Erasmus' theology, see Chomarat 'Grammar and Rhetoric' 60–1, 66.
250 Book 1 321
251 Book 3 CWE 68 963; see Gregory of Nazianzus *Oration* 31.37 (*On the Holy Spirit*); Nazianzus 138.

evidence of the content and method of preaching, its supreme importance, and how Jesus' own apostles were to provide for preachers in the generations after them.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost represents the true beginning of the apostles' mission. Without ministers of the 'celestial philosophy' God's plan could not have continued; essentially God staked everything on them to carry on Christ's teaching as the church's first bishops. Accordingly, in the postapostolic age Christ the teacher continued his work in a very real way; and for this reason, godly Christians did not need to look for Christ in the relics of his earthly life – footprints, tunic, the wood of the cross, or in statuary representations – but could seek 'instead the living and breathing likeness of him'[252] in the gospel writings and listen to his teachers who interpret them for us. As Erasmus writes, 'After God himself the church has nothing more sacred, more wholesome, more venerable, and more sublime than the word of God, that is, canonical Scripture . . .,'[253] and Christ's presence and mission in the church as the highest *ecclesiastes* continues daily through those whom he has called to interpret canonical Scripture. 'In church it is not Christ who is teaching, but it is the word of Christ that teaches; and the spirit of Christ speaks through the mouth of a man.'[254]

Erasmus' *ecclesiastes* functions therefore as Christ's vicar, upon whom Christ's ongoing earthly work depends. As Paul says, without preachers 'how then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent . . . Faith then comes by hearing; and hearing by the word of Christ' (Rom 10:14–17). But much has changed since the apostolic age. That immediate infusion of Christ's spirit at Pentecost is not the experience of clergy

* * * * *

252 *Paraclesis* in Olin 105–6

253 See book 1 329. As in *Ratio* (211) Erasmus ranks the canonical books of the Bible according to 'some order of authority,' those of greatest weight being ones whose validity has never been questioned by the ancients: 'Isaiah is of more weight than Judith or Esther, Matthew's Gospel more than the Apocalypse ascribed to John, more to the Epistle of Paul to the Romans and Corinthians than the Epistle written to the Hebrews.' See also *Ratio* 294.

254 Book 3 CWE 68 883. The idea that we know Christ even more today through preaching Scripture than if we had lived with him during his earthly life finds a parallel in Erasmus' dedicatory letter to William Warham for the edition of St Jerome's works: 'If a man had lived in familiar converse with Cicero . . . for several years, he will know less of Cicero than they do who by constant reading of what he wrote converse with his spirit every day' (CWE 61 5).

in this era. The age of dazzling miracles ended[255] along with that primitive pentecostal fervour and the eloquence it engendered; the Holy Spirit now moves in different ways. Erasmus explains that 'miracles had their time, nor are there fewer miracles because the inspiration of the Spirit is silent; the altered nature of the times required this, and the gift of God is no less free because he determined to give it in this way. It is the same gift of the same Spirit but given differently according to the condition of the times, and it must not be doubted that it is given in a more perfect way.'[256] In fact, the new prophets who succeeded the apostles are far greater than the prophets of old: they have succeeded to the place 'of the apostles or rather, more truly, that of Christ himself.'[257] These are 'prophets of prophets' 'inasmuch as it is useless for the prophets to have written for us unless this new kind of prophet exists to interpret them.'[258] Erasmus illustrates the difference between the prophets of old and preachers of today in the new type of prophecy spoken of by Paul in 1 Corinthians (12:28–9), where we read that the prophets of the New Testament are teachers who 'enable us to understand the Scriptures by digging out the mysteries in them according to their spiritual meaning, offering the new and the old from their treasure stores'; they are 'trained to compare the spiritual with the spiritual.'[259]

Having set forth the ideal of the true *ecclesiastes* as embodied in Christ and a theology of God's love and plan for humanity, Erasmus embarks on

* * * * *

255 See book 1 283: 'Miracles have all but ceased.' On his day and age not depending on miracles, see Erasmus' letter to John Longland (Basel, 1 September 1528), Ep 2037:95–100. 'The Christian religion today does not depend on miracles, and it is no secret how many false beliefs have been brought into the world through men who are clever in procuring their own gain with the aid of fabricated miracles. We will believe much more firmly in what we read in the Scriptures if we do not believe in any old tales invented by men.'

256 Book 1 394

257 Book 1 372: 'Prophets I call those that announce the will of God to the people from the oracles of Scripture, so that they can legitimately use that preamble of the prophets, "The Lord says this."' Cf 1 Cor 14:37.

258 Book 1 397; cf 1 Cor 14:5; J. Vitrier 'Sermon de la Penthecouste' fol 209 verso in Godin *Spiritualité* 184 and n165.

259 Book 1 388; see also Erasmus' interpretation of this passage in *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* 12:28 ASD VI-8 246–8, where he reads Paul to mean that God places first the apostles in the church to give the whole an order, then prophets, then teachers, and then powers. He does not mean by this that these are different groups of people, but that they are the same, though he ranks their functions in this way.

a programme to rehabilitate the fallen status of the preacher first by calling attention to the dismal state of preaching, where the social position of the preacher has been sadly demeaned – indeed, even scorned – not only by the faithful but even by so many whom Christ himself called to this office. Because of the clergy's widespread neglect of their pastoral duties, dissolute living, and the scandal these have caused, Erasmus envisions the rehabilitation of the preacher in the eyes of society as the necessary first step to reform the ministry of the word. To this end he begins by emphasizing the wondrous spiritual dignity of this office in order to correct society's foolish judgment of the preacher; from there he will address the instruction of the preacher. His goal is to impress upon clergy and laity alike the essence of the preacher's work so that everyone might understand 'the dignity, the difficulty, the purity, the courage, the usefulness, the reward of the faithful preacher.'[260] Once the preacher has grasped the profound significance of his role as dispenser of God's mysteries,[261] he will then strive zealously to reform his life and embrace his holy calling; in doing so, he will garner from his flock much favour along with the moral authority to compel others to embrace his message.

Erasmus' rhetorical display in book 1 to impress upon his readers the dignity of this office recalls the academic lectures that inaugurate the school year and those of new masters who received their *licentia docendi*, which essay to move students to pursue their subject by extolling its nature, usefulness, and importance.[262] Book 1 of *Ecclesiastes* is a tour de force, reminiscent of the *Paraclesis*, which he placed among the introductory writings to his Greek and Latin edition of the *Novum Instrumentum* (1516); it displays, in fact, many of the rhetorical devices he explains later in *Ecclesiastes* for preachers to render speech more forceful, and touches too on many themes Erasmus takes up later in greater detail. The design is to comment on the dismal condition of sacred oratory, reviewing the lamentable practices of many contemporary preachers while offering clergy a *paraenesis* to pattern their lives and ministry after Christ, the perfect *ecclesiastes*; such a man would not fear to take the message of the gospel to far distant lands or 'to give up

* * * * *

260 Book 1 443

261 Cf 1 Cor 4:1.

262 For the speaking styles (*genera dicendi*), see Quintilian 12.10.58–80. For an early example of an inaugural academic lecture, see that of Thomas Aquinas in Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., *Saint Thomas Aquinas* 1: *The Person and His Work* rev ed trans Robert Royal (Washington, DC c 1996, 2005) 50–3.

one's life for the gospel.'[263] Book 1 also cautions future preachers that before they open their mouths to speak 'there must be judgment before there is expression, knowledge before speech';[264] they must first become individuals of outstanding speaking ability and of good moral character. Long before they preach they should be required to devote extensive hours to perfecting their own spiritual lives and dedicate themselves entirely to the subjects comprising their *métier*. Such is the challenge.

To impress upon preachers the exalted status of their office, Erasmus employs numerous rhetorical devices (comparisons and contrasts, a fortiori arguments, enthymemes,[265] examples, amplification). In book 1, for example, he compares and contrasts the infinite difference between ambassadors (*oratores*) of princes and the ambassadors of Christ, the highest prince; if so much is expected of ambassadors of kings and potentates, 'how much greater are the qualities to be required of the evangelical preacher?'[266] If the requirements regulating the Aaronic priesthood were so strict under the Mosaic law, how much greater are those imposed on preachers of Christ under the New Law?[267] Erasmus draws upon comparisons from his earlier works: 'You listen carefully to someone who professes how a field, the nourisher of your body, should be cultivated, and do you not heed someone who teaches how the mind, which bears the fruit of eternal happiness, should be cultivated?'[268] In much of book 1 Erasmus deftly adapts these turns of speech to the traditional schemata contrasting the Old and New Testaments – type and antitype, shadow and substance, promise and fulfilment, Old Law and New Law, flesh and spirit, letter and spirit. The schemata in turn also allow him to amplify the contrast between the secular and the sacred, human society and the society of believers, pagans and Christians, body and soul, flesh and spirit. Having established the standard of moral excellence that should characterize the *ecclesiastes*, Erasmus then takes up the principles of oratorical artistry (*ars bene dicendi*), dialectic, biblical hermeneutics, preaching

* * * * *

263 Book 1 363
264 Book 2 CWE 68 473
265 Erasmus often speaks of the enthymeme; see book 2 CWE 68 716, where he defines it as 'a maxim with a reason adjoined.' See also book 3 CWE 68 867.
266 Book 1 319
267 Book 1 302
268 Book 1 441. Such techniques characterize the arguments in many of Erasmus' works, especially those on education; see eg *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 313–4. See also Plutarch *De liberis educandis* 4A–B.

methods, and topics. Before we look at these, however, it is instructive to review some of the principal themes Erasmus addresses throughout this treatise, as well as the questions he anticipates readers raising. Many themes register important nuances and precisions in the development of Erasmus' thinking towards the close of his life; *Ecclesiastes* after all would be Erasmus' last major public statement on theological matters, in effect, his final word.

Among the misguided ideas about preaching that Lateran v singles out was the dangerous notion that a cleric, by virtue of his ordination, needed no further schooling to preach. Evidently there were also many self-appointed preachers at the time for whom even the question of ordination was irrelevant. Was it at all necessary for a zealous cleric or religious, or for one who suddenly felt inspired by the Holy Spirit, to be trained for years in liberal studies, oratorical rhetoric, or even sacred letters for that matter? Wouldn't the grace of the Holy Spirit suffice, as evidenced by the prophets of the Old Testament? On the contrary, Erasmus insists that instruction in grammar, rhetoric, scriptural languages, theology, and other germane disciplines was fundamental for preaching; like the pursuit of *pietas*, effective communication depended on constant human application, for 'that heavenly Spirit is so far from scorning our industry that it even demands it, and it does not disdain to have its gifts assisted in turn by our application . . .'[269] Moreover 'the Holy Spirit works more fully if it finds a heart readied by the liberal disciplines,'[270] and of those disciplines genuine theology holds primacy of place, while grammar and rhetoric are its handmaidens.[271] The cleric must do all he can to preach well, which clearly includes the acquisition of languages. In *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* (1519) Erasmus tells Jacques Masson (Jacobus Latomus): 'If we think that explaining the sacred texts is important to theology, if we judge it a sign of holiness to show wisdom in revealing the hidden mysteries of the Scriptures, which often lurk behind the formation of the very letters, then we must admit that no single subject is more dependent on languages than theology.'[272] These every preacher must strive to acquire. And what else is theology but 'piety linked to skill in speaking of the divine'?[273] Critical too, of course, is the spiritual disposition of the preacher who must humbly attribute every good result to the Spirit, all the

* * * * *

269 Book 2 CWE 68 470
270 Book 2 CWE 68 471
271 See the letter to Christopher Fisher (Paris [about March] 1505), Ep 182:94–6.
272 CWE 71 41
273 *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* CWE 71 55

while praying constantly to the Lord of the harvest that there be an increase, for the Spirit 'requires our own effort so that through it the Spirit can work in us not less but more secretly.'[274] At the heart of the preacher's activity then lie the deep mystery of human cooperation with divine grace and the understanding that the Holy Spirit demands constant effort on our part.

Believing in the Holy Spirit's assistance, the godly preacher will also labour sedulously to accommodate himself to his audience. In this he reflects the sublime beneficence of God, who graciously accommodated himself to our humanity, above all in his gift to us of Jesus Christ, his Word, whose speech and life were perfectly tempered to engage humanity and invite it to godliness. The ancients' emphasis on the importance of accommodation could not be better illustrated than in the person and earthly ministry of Christ. The word 'accommodate' (*attemperare, temperare, accommodare*) runs throughout *Ecclesiastes*, as well as in Erasmus' other works;[275] with it he reminds preachers to adapt their ideas, words, and comportment to their listeners, as God does with humanity and as Jesus did throughout his earthly ministry.[276] Accommodation presupposes sound judgment and a sense of what is fitting (*aptum*); for learning is a slow process, and profound doctrines need to be unfolded gradually to those of limited capacity, as Jesus, Paul, and the apostles, Origen, Gregory of Nazianzus, and John Chrysostom attest.[277] As examples of such accommodation, Erasmus calls attention to the extraordinary thoughtfulness of Peter's speech on Pentecost (Acts 2:14–40)

* * * * *

274 Book 1 322; and Grünwald 96–8

275 See eg *Hyperaspistes* 1 CWE 76 172.

276 'One should consider throughout the address what is demanded by the case, the person, the time, the place, custom, and all the while what is appropriate as well'; see book 3 CWE 68 1002. See also Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle *Rhetoric and Reform: Erasmus' Civil Dispute with Luther* (Cambridge, Mass 1983); *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 315 n102; McConica 'Grammar of Consent' 77–8, where 'Erasmus presents Christ himself as a kind of Proteus, whose variety of life and doctrine reaches out to men of all conditions, drawing them to himself and actually enhancing his essential harmony, as *omnia in omnibus*.' See of course Quintilian (passim) and Horace *Ars poetica* (passim); the theme runs throughout the ancient authors on literature and public speaking. For some uses of accommodation, see Lausberg §§258, 448, 808, 820, 823.2, 1058, 1084.

277 *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* CWE 71 75–6: 'Both Origen and Chrysostom teach that the doctrine of God in man was not preached immediately and everywhere lest it should prove a stumbling-block to minds which were still not attuned to such a mystery and incapable of accepting it. In the Gospel itself the disciples are at first forbidden to proclaim Jesus as Christ.'

and Paul's preaching on the Areopagus (Acts 17:22–31),[278] where neither Peter nor Paul attempted to put the whole truth at once before their audiences, because they judged the need to disclose their teachings in such a way that listeners could absorb what they heard before moving on to more recondite truths.[279] With this kind of judgment also belongs the principle of decorum,[280] with which the preacher discerns what is appropriate to each person's station before attacking vices, praising virtues, and giving instruction in the necessary matters of the faith. Like judgment, a sense of what is fitting, the ancients say, comes only through experience, and even then, they remind us, some speakers never learn what is appropriate to say.

Because of the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the public speakers Erasmus instructs are in a qualitative sense infinitely different from the *oratores* Quintilian had in mind. The pagan rhetoricians believed that one's own experience brought judgment and discretion about what was appropriate,[281] 'skills that cannot be imparted by instruction but are derived from the orator's intelligence and are adopted from the circumstances of the case.'[282] But what the pagans attributed exclusively to human experience and sensitivity, Erasmus attributes in large measure to the mysterious activity of the Holy Spirit: 'The heavenly Spirit, by whose inspiration the preacher talks, does not disdain human effort, provided it be sober.'[283] Paul writes that 'the spirits of the prophets were subject to the prophets' (1 Cor 14:32),[284]

* * * * *

278 Book 1 301, 280; book 2 CWE 68 523; book 3 CWE 68 1006

279 Cf *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 87: 'With such words our Lord Jesus instructed the unschooled and foolish crowd, wanting to draw them from the love of visible and physical things to the desire for things heavenly and eternal.' See also CWE 46 82: 'Jesus overlooked the people's ignorance and led them slowly to an awareness of spiritual matters in this way . . .'

280 Book 3 CWE 68 1014: 'Moreover, one must everywhere have regard for decorum.' Cf 1 Cor 6:12.

281 Book 1 281–4. The ancients saw the appropriate (*aptum*) as divided into judgment (*iudicium*) and counsel (*consilium*), which define the *prudentia* of the speaker; see Lausberg §§258, 1055–62, 1074–7.

282 Book 1 281. On the idea of 'circumstance' (*circumstantia*), see Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 162–7, and Lausberg §§139 and 399.

283 Book 2 CWE 68 497

284 Book 2 CWE 68 497; Erasmus quotes 1 Cor 14:32; see *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli ad Corinthios priorem* CWE 43 170–3; and *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* (14:31–40) ASD VI-8 282: '*πνεύματα* Graecis plurativi numeri est, [E] quemadmodum citat Hieronymus prologo in Esaiam: *Spiritus prophetarum, prophetis subiecti sunt*. [A] Et "subiiciuntur" *ὑποτάσσεται* [B] verbum praesentis temporis,

which Erasmus interprets to mean that the Holy Spirit actively (however mysteriously) assists the preacher in finding what to say, arranging the matter, and delivering the sermon, though the full responsibility for speaking appositely lies with the man himself. Moreover, this preacher of the New Law is a prophet far different from that of the Old Law. Since the Holy Spirit no longer 'seizes' its prophets as it once did, for example, with Amos (Amos 7:15), today's preacher is to have his sermon under his own control (2 Cor 14:32), accommodating himself in a way that 'considers everywhere what is appropriate to each.'[285] In addition, the Holy Spirit acts differently with each individual,[286] for 'in a sacred orator judgment is a gift of the Holy Spirit;[287] but that Spirit tempers its force [*energia*] according to the organ that it has found, especially now that miracles have all but ceased,[288] so that a future preacher not only needs to be trained but must also be chosen for his obvious fitness for the office.'[289] Whatever the preacher's individual nature, talents, and suitability, the Holy Spirit engages uniquely and mysteriously with him as he labours to become a useful vessel of the Lord; as Solomon says, 'It is man's part to prepare the heart and the Lord's to guide the tongue.'[290] And it will be one of the bishop's special duties to select and prepare those seemingly best suited to preach.

* * * * *

[A] ne sentiamus hoc dictum de ipso Spiritu Sancto, sed dono Spiritus, quod ita datum esset singulis quibus contigit, ut in ipsorum esset arbitrio uti aut non uti, quod afflatis et lymphatis non item licet.'

285 Book 2 CWE 68 629

286 Cf Acts 2:4–13. Erasmus raises the complicated theological question here of the Holy Spirit's activity in assisting the preacher. Though he never analyzes this matter in *Ecclesiastes*, he provides numerous ways of considering what must be taken as a given; for even in the most deplorable situations, one cannot deny that the Holy Spirit is not somehow at work, as his example of Balaam's she-ass demonstrates (see Numbers 22).

287 Book 1 283. Erasmus refers to Isa 11:2–3, the locus for the theology of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: 'And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel [*consilium*], and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness [*pietas*]. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.'

288 Erasmus expresses his view that, after Jesus' earthly ministry and the age of the apostles, Christ's work continues in the church through the ministry of preaching; and for this God uses each preacher according to his nature and capacity. This treatise aims at identifying those who 'seem fitted by nature for this office' and providing direction.

289 Book 1 283

290 Prov 16:1; book 1 323

In the godly man preparing to preach well, Erasmus sees the grace of the Holy Spirit congruently perfecting his nature, allowing him to speak effectively in so far as his nature allows. The preacher mirrors Erasmus' view of the individual, the baptized Christian, the church, God's law – in short, his entire 'philosophy of Christ' and the path of *pietas*.[291] As the preacher progresses in virtue with God's grace towards godliness, he does not alter his physical characteristics; rather, his progress perfects that nature vitiated by Adam's sin and restores to its fullness what was originally there. In the measure the preacher cooperates with God's grace, the Holy Spirit transforms its vessel of clay into something stupendous, the mouthpiece of God's word, which spiritually vivifies all who receive the truth. Perfected in godliness, the preacher's body and spirit, his whole life and example, radiate him whose message he proclaims.[292] While the physical traits of the preacher do not change (for example, voice, physical size and shape, stamina), the divine Spirit now speaks through him 'as if through a living organ,'[293] making Christ present to the congregation through the preacher's word and life. In a spiritual sense, Erasmus' godly preacher receives in abundant measure the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (*charismata*) that are imparted to all Christians at baptism – wisdom, understanding, counsel (*consilium*), fortitude, knowledge (*scientia*), godliness (*pietas*, εὐσέβεια),[294] and fear of the Lord[295] – each gift particularly vital for speaking God's word well.

The Holy Spirit's activity in the life and work of the preacher further underscores the enormous responsibility laid upon the teacher-bishop in his role within the church. The bishop not only should reside in his diocese and preach, to the extent he is physically able, but must provide good preachers, and, perhaps even more important, the right environment where aspiring preachers can work to perfect their native talents to assist him. As it is the

* * * * *

291 Cf *Ratio* 236: 'huc tendit universa Christi doctrina, ut ipsi pie sancteque vitam traducamus . . .'

292 See the opening passage of book 2 CWE 68 466 where Erasmus remarks on the transformed physical appearance of those who have embraced the spirit of Christ: 'The mind's interior appearance moves into the outer man and wholly transfigures him to its own image'; and 'How much more will the spirit of Christ alter a man's whole appearance if it inhabits his heart?'

293 Book 1 259

294 For Thomas Aquinas' teaching on piety as both a gift and a virtue, see *Summa theologiae* I–II qq 68 and 121.

295 Cf Isa 11:2–3. The Vulgate and Septuagint texts give seven gifts, the Hebrew text six.

bishop upon whom God places the weighty responsibility of 'feeding the flock of the Lord with zeal and joy out of the abundance of charity,'[296] so too must he judiciously select and continually assist his presbyters, who collaborate with him in carrying out God's plan of salvation. Bishops and religious superiors therefore should not presume to admit indiscriminately persons unsuited to this office but select only those who show both a natural aptitude and spiritual disposition for this mission, and provide the means for instructing them to carry out their pastoral duties.

The office of the bishop is therefore central to Erasmus' ecclesiology, for it is in the *synaxis* of the faithful that Christ becomes really present through his word. Erasmus further makes clear that in his earthly life Jesus established a visible, hierarchical structure in the church that is to remain until the end of the world,[297] and that he continues to be really present among the faithful in the teaching of the heavenly philosophy by the bishop, the successor of the apostles and Christ's legitimate representative.[298] 'The highest dignity in the ecclesiastical hierarchy' belongs to him because in the

* * * * *

296 Book 1 277. For the tradition of identifying 'feeding' (ie teaching the gospel) with the Eucharist, see Grünwald 93–4; cf Thomas à Kempis *Imitation of Christ* 4.11.

297 On hierarchy in Erasmus, see Rummel *Erasmus* (London and New York 2004) 54–7: 'Hierarchical order is the principle that informs Erasmus' definition of piety as well as his views on the best organization of society' (54). See also McConica 'Grammar of Consent' 89–97.

298 The apostle is in the bishop 'whose chief duty (*munus praecipuum*) is to teach the people.' For Erasmus' ecclesiology, see: Ernst-Wilhlem Kohls *Die Theologie des Erasmus* 2 vols (Basel 1966); Peter G. Bietenholz *History and Biography in the Work of Erasmus of Rotterdam* (Geneva 1966); J. Ijsewijn and C. Matheeussen 'Érasme et l'historiographie' in *The Late Middle Ages and the Dawn of Humanism outside Italy* ed Mag. G. Verbeke and J. Ijsewijn (Louvain 1972) 31–43; Hilmar M. Pabel 'The Peaceful People of Christ: The Irenic Ecclesiology of Erasmus of Rotterdam' in Pabel 57–93; Dominic Baker-Smith introduction CWE 63 especially lvi–lxiv; Myron P. Gilmore '*Fides et Eruditio:* Erasmus and the Study of History' in *Humanists and Jurists: Six Studies in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, Mass 1963) 87–114; Gogan; Harry J. McSorley 'Erasmus and the Primacy of the Roman Pontiff: Between Conciliarism and Papalism' *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 65 (1974) 37–54; Stupperich; and István Bejczy *Erasmus and the Middle Ages: The Historical Consciousness of a Christian Humanist* (Leiden 2001). See also Cornelis Augustijn 'The Ecclesiology of Erasmus' *Scrinium* II 135–55; and Manfred Hoffmann 'Erasmus on Church and Ministry' ERSY 6 (1986) 1–30, who finds a 'remarkable consistency' in *Ecclesiastes* with Erasmus' many earlier 'statements on the church and its ministry' (5). See also Erasmus' *Inquisitio de fide* ed Craig R. Thompson (New Haven and London 1950).

fullest sense he carries on the work of Christ.[299] Repeatedly Erasmus insists that the bishop's role is to teach: 'However many the functions, chief among which are administration of the sacraments and spiritual instruction, he [the bishop] is at the pinnacle of his dignity whenever he feeds the souls of the people with the flesh and blood of Christ, which is the word of God.'[300] Preaching to instruct Christians towards godliness is his chief duty (*munus praecipuum*);[301] it the essence of the apostolic office,[302] as Paul attests at 1 Corinthians 1:17 – 'Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel . . .' As successors of the apostles, bishops also perform other functions, but in rank of importance preaching is supreme. Moreover, Erasmus would allow no one to preach other than those delegated by the bishop, whose authority derives from Christ and passes to him through the apostolic succession.

Like the Lateran Councils, Erasmus describes the bishop's work of teaching as 'feeding,' which recalls Jesus' command to Peter, 'feed my sheep'

* * * * *

299 Book 1 328. Cf Thomas Aquinas: 'Preaching is the noblest of all ecclesiastical functions'; cited by Murphy *Rhetoric* 275 n8.

300 Book 1 403; and in this function too 'the prelate, though outstanding in everything, is absolutely at the peak of his dignity when he feeds the Lord's flock with sacred teaching from the pulpit and dispenses to them the treasure of evangelical philosophy.' Erasmus says next to nothing about the physical aspect of the sacrament of the Eucharist; he sets it rather in the context of preaching the word, which opens up the minds and hearts of the community to see in faith Christ who is among them. See Augustijn *Erasmus* 150–3; Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 101: 'What makes the Bible unique, universal, and final, however, is that Christ, the ultimate word of God, is incarnate in it as by a real presence . . . Therefore, Christ is at once symbolically and really present in the sacred word, symbolically as to the human nature of the word and really in terms of the divine nature of the word . . .'; and Grünwald 89–90.

301 Book 1 268. Erasmus made this point in Ep 967A to Justus Jonas (Antwerp, [c 20–6 May?] 1519) CWE 6 375: 'It may be splendid to move your hand in blessing over a multitude on its knees, it may be a great thing to administer the sacraments of the church; unquestionably the noblest office, the most truly worthy of apostle or of bishop, is to offer the doctrine of salvation to the people and make their thoughts and their life worthy of Christ.'

302 Cf Ep 1790:470, letter to John Longland (Basel, 3 March 1527), which is the preface to his *Chrysostomi lucubrationes* (1527), where he contrasts the eloquence of Athanasius as teacher with that of Tertullian, Jerome, Hilary, Augustine, Chrysostom, and Gregory of Nazianzus: 'Athanasius deserved to live in an age of peace and tranquillity; he would then have given us the marvellous fruit of his mind and of his eloquence, for he possessed that quality which Paul thought essential in a bishop – the ability to teach (*Habebat enim vere dotem illam quam Paulus in episcopo putat esse praecipuam*, τὸ διδακτικόν).'

and 'feed my lambs' (John 21:15–17). Preaching is the spiritual nourishment essential to the dispensation of the sacraments. As Jesus made manifest through preaching the spiritual significances of his earthly actions, the preacher does the same in the rites and ceremonies of the church. His words give life to the letter, ceremony, ritual, and events;[303] in fact, every sacrament, sacred rite, and religious observance would be meaningless without one to explain its spiritual significance.[304] 'What good is receiving the Lord's body and blood unless they have learned how this sacrament was instituted, what it effects in us, the faith and purity with which it should be received?'[305] Without the word, the sacraments and all other rites and ceremonies of the church remain blind and lifeless.

Erasmus' primary model of the church is Paul's image of the mystical body of Christ (cf Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 12:12–26), whose head is Christ, the paragon of godliness (*pietas*), and whose members are the faithful united in peace and concord, both those of the church triumphant in heavenly beatitude and those of the church militant plodding along the path of spiritual progress, persevering in godliness from the domination of the flesh to the freedom of the spirit.[306] Unlike those whose model of the church centred on

* * * * *

303 See eg Luke 24:31–3, and *Paraphrasis in Lucam 11–24* CWE 48 271–2, where Erasmus recounts Jesus' conversation with two disciples on the road to Emmaus after his resurrection: 'They did not recognize Jesus except in the house, that is, the church; they did not recognize him except when he himself offered them the bread of the gospel word. For that is what opens the eyes by which Jesus is recognized. He had broken and offered that bread mystically during the journey, when he unveiled the Scriptures to them. And what he had done there in spirit he afterward renewed in the bodily sign.' See Chomarat 'Grammar and Rhetoric' 52–3.

304 Godin refers to this idea in Jean Vitrier's *homiliare* (258r/v) in *Spiritualité* 209: 'Il est vray que c'est merveilleusement grand chose du sainct Sacrement, et je loue fort ce que je le vois fort honnourer, et admoneste chescun de le rechepvoir sainctement, et en grand reverence. Mais je dis cela que le sainct Sacrement ne prouffite non plus que on a de foi. Sainct Pol, premier hermitte, fut soixante ans en sa caverne sans le rechepvoir sacramentellement, et se fut sy très accepté de Dieu.'

305 Book 1 403

306 See *Enchiridion* CWE 66 especially the 'Fifth rule' 65–84: 'Perfect piety is the attempt to progress always from visible things, which are usually imperfect or indifferent, to invisible ...' (65); see also 83–4; and the 'Sixth rule,' 84–104, which presents Christ as the model of perfect piety. See Godin 34–76, which examines Origen's influence in the genesis of this work; see also Hilmar M. Pabel 'Erasmus' Irenic Vision of the Church' in Pabel 61–2. Cf *De puritate tabernaculi* CWE 65 217–67 and McConica 'Grammar of Consent' passim.

papal authority grounded in the Petrine texts (Matt 16:16–19; John 21:15–17; Luke 22:38),[307] Erasmus conceives of the church broadly as the congregation of the faithful that existed *ab initio*, much as Augustine viewed it: from the time of Abel, 'who belonged to the city of God,'[308] down to the patriarchs, through the history of the Hebrews to the time of Christ, and from then to the end of time. Where this 'church unknown to us'[309] is and who are those who belong to God remains always a mystery; it is Augustine's 'mixed church,' which embraces all Christians, the good and the bad alike, where 'even those who live impiously and heretics'[310] are tolerated and each baptized person is offered the grace to move from the bondage of the flesh to the liberation of the spirit. In the end, however, only God knows each one's eternal destination, but to each is extended the hope of eternal life, which is why preaching is of crucial importance in God's plan of salvation.[311]

* * * * *

307 On papal primacy and the papacy, see eg Johann Maier of Eck *Enchiridion locorum communionum adversus Luterum et alios hostes Ecclesiae (1525–1543)* Corpus Catholicorum 34 (Münster 1979); 'Papal Primacy' in *The Papacy: An Encyclopedia* ed Philippe Levillain 3 vols (New York and London 2002) I 1240–8; John E. Bigane III *Faith, Christ, or Peter: Matthew 16:18 in Sixteenth Century Roman Catholic Exegesis* (Washington, DC 1981) 15–68, who finds Erasmus' interpretation of the word *petra* in Matt 16:18 as referring to faith, not Peter or the church; Augustijn *Erasmus* 101; Tracy (1) 108; Bernhard Schimmelpfennig *The Papacy* (New York 1992); Michael Wilks *The Problem of Sovereignty in the Later Middle Ages: The Papal Monarchy with Augustinus Triumphus and the Publicists* (Cambridge 1963); Jared Wicks *Cajetan Responds: A Reader in Reformation Controversy* (Washington, DC 1978), and his 'Roman Reactions to Luther: The First Year (1518)' *Catholic Historical Review* 69 (1983) 521–62; Paolo Prodi *The Papal Prince: One Body and Two Souls: The Papal Monarchy in Early Modern Europe* trans Susan Haskins (Cambridge 1987).

308 Augustine *De civitate Dei* 15.1; see especially books 1–5. See also Tarsicius J. van Bavel 'Church' in *Augustine* 169–76; and the essays in Pabel. See *De puritate tabernaculi* CWE 65 228: 'The church of the just which is the body of Christ has existed from the very beginning of the world and so has the Christian message, that is, the remission of sins which was divinely revealed and has as its source the mercy of God freely given for Christ's sake; there has existed also the grace which has purified men's hearts by faith, although the incarnate Christ and the preaching of the apostles caused it to spread further and to shine forth more brightly. Indeed, what St Paul so often emphasized held true even then, namely that no one attains perfect righteousness through the Law or the works of the Law except by trusting in Christ . . .'

309 Book 3 CWE 68 994

310 Book 3 CWE 68 994

311 See *De concordia* CWE 65 152: 'There is a measure of truth in what some say, that the church is invisible. Only God can see into human hearts and know for

Erasmus similarly envisions the church in a dynamic way, where what had been prepared slowly by God teaching his people over time through crude ceremonies and types[312] as a method of progressive revelation at last became brightly manifest with the coming of Christ; as teacher of the heavenly philosophy, he made known to us what these previous things signified and finally at Pentecost revealed them abundantly through the Holy Spirit. As the church progresses through time, approaching the final age when Christ will be joined fully with his members, and as it becomes more perfected in love and concord,[313] it will more and more 'reflect the image of that heavenly one in which there is perfect order and perfect harmony,' until finally 'a new heaven and a new earth[314] are created not by the destruction of matter but by the removal of corruption.'[315] The eschatological age of a perfected church will be the result of a long and continuous process of ever more regular, diligent, and pure preaching.

In this vision of the church where the bishop functions primarily as teacher, Erasmus reminds us that Jesus neither baptized, anointed, nor administered the sacraments, but he taught continually.[316] Erasmus does not dismiss or discount the administration of the sacraments or the other functions that bishops and their coadjutors commonly perform, but he is emphatic

* * * * *

certain which are his own. But often we find that there are various methods which can be used to determine where we may find God's church, and where the synagogues of Satan; for the sins of many "run before them to judgment." But even this visible church, containing as it does wrongdoers together with the good, gives an extraordinarily imposing impression of zeal whenever it assembles for the ritual expression of devotion.' Cf book 2 CWE 68 695 where he describes the church by etymology: 'The church is called a "congregation" or "assembly" which comes together to hear the word of God; hence where there is no time for sacred learning, where there are discordant minds, there is no church.'

312 For types in Erasmus' exegesis, see *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 217 n117: 'Distinct from allegory in use though not always in name was typology, the interpretation of later events by earlier ones now perceived or believed to have prefigured them. Thus the preference of Isaac for Jacob prefigured the divine protection of Israel. The most characteristic typology found "types" of actions or persons in the Old Testament prefiguring those of the New; Adam and David prefigured Christ. Interpretation of much of the Old Testament by writers of the New Testament was inescapably typological . . .'

313 Cf Eph 4:13–15.

314 See 2 Pet 3:13; Heb 12:22; Rev 21.

315 Book 1 255

316 Cf 1 Cor 1:17: 'For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel . . .' See also *Ratio* 199–200.

that it is in 'this supreme office of teaching' that the *ecclesiastes* 'should surpass himself.'[317] Teaching, after all, is the way God dealt with the children of Israel and Christ with those of his time; it should be the bishop's absolute priority. To emphasize this, Erasmus invokes the uncommon practice of John Colet, dean of St Paul's in London, who, unlike his contemporary priests in England who said mass every day, 'was content to celebrate on Sundays and festivals, or at least on very few days besides them; either because he was occupied with the sacred studies with which he used to prepare himself for preaching, and by the business of his cathedral, or because he discovered that he celebrated with more lively feeling if he did it at intervals.'[318] Like Colet, the good minister of the word knows that preparation for preaching is demanding, time-consuming, and must be foremost in his mind.

Erasmus acknowledges that at times the content of a bishop's teaching might clash with the teachings of his fellow bishops. Though he does not dwell on the relationship of bishops to one another, the relationship of bishops to the pope, or of the pope to universal councils of the church,[319] he identifies a singularly critical role for the supreme pontiff, the bishop of Rome, as judge. Because disagreements among teacher-bishops are inevitably bound to occur,[320] the universal church requires a single authority to whom all other bishops must submit their judgment; 'the existence of a single Roman pope to preside over all the churches is useful for fending off schisms.'[321] As the bishop exercises this role in his own diocese, so this expanded role befits the pope, 'the monarch of the church' and 'the pastor of the whole world,'[322] who serves as a catalyst of concord and a supreme

* * * * *

317 Book 1 403; see eg: 'How great, then, is the dignity befitting the ministers of the New Testament, who daily sacrifice that heavenly victim that merits the adoration even of the angelic spirits, who touch with their hands the flesh of the immaculate lamb!' Book 1 319.

318 Letter to Justus Jonas (Anderlecht, 13 June 1521) Ep 1211:240; for Colet see John Gleason *John Colet* (Berkeley 1989) and ER 2 36–8.

319 On Erasmus' view of the relationship of the pope to a general council of the church, see Minnich 52–3. Erasmus raises some of these questions in *Ratio* (206), though without taking a stand on them. See also his dedicatory letter to John Colet in *De copia* CWE 24 284: 'First, you observed that the richest rewards of charity lie in bringing Christ into the hearts of one's countrymen by continual preaching and by holy instruction.'

320 Cf 1 Cor 11:19.

321 Book 1 343

322 Book 1 360 'the monarch of the church' *monarcha ecclesiae*; book 1 359 *totius orbis pastor*

judge for the entire church, insuring that schisms do not occur and speaking out the consensus of bishops and the faithful everywhere. Erasmus tells Paul Volz (1518) that the pope is the 'principal teacher' of 'the heavenly philosophy of Christ.'[323] Though Erasmus neither asserts that this special power of the pope exists *de iure divino* (though arguably he strongly implies this), nor attributes to the pope the gift of infallibility, nor advances any type of anticonciliarist (or conciliarist) position,[324] he grants the pope this traditional ecclesiastical pre-eminence and jurisdictional prerogative because 'the Roman Pontiff, as he is the nearer to Christ whose role he performs,'[325] requires that ultimately all bishops submit to his judgment in obedience to Christ.[326] Without this prerogative, schisms and, even worse, heresies would resist every effort to resolve them, wherefore the pope alone enjoys the finality of judgment for the universal church.[327]

Erasmus does not directly entertain the question whether a pope might err in matters of faith and morals or whether a council may intervene to depose a pope teaching heretical doctrines. Words on these questions occur

* * * * *

323 Letter to Paul Volz (Basel, 14 August 1518), Ep 858:219–22: 'And yet no man more truly forwards the business of the pontiff than he who publishes in its pure form the heavenly philosophy of Christ, of which the pope is the principal teacher.'

324 See Stupperich 351–2.

325 Book 2 CWE 68 594 *vicinior est Christo cuius vices gerit*

326 See also Gogan 409. Cf Erasmus' letter to Arkleb of Boskovice (Louvain, 28 January 1521), Ep 1183:80–6: 'I cannot now discuss the source whence this authority [supreme authority of the pope] was originally conveyed to him; to say the least, just as in the early days out of many priests who were still all equal one bishop was chosen for the prevention of schism, so now it is expedient for one pope to be chosen out of all the bishops, not only to rule out divisions but to restrain the despotism of other bishops, should any one oppress his own flock, and of secular princes.' McSorley argues that Erasmus changed his view shortly afterwards: 'By June of 1524 Erasmus had, under the influence of his fresh awareness of the decrees of the Council of Florence, begun to make decisions about two questions that, until that time, had not really been clear in his mind: (1) is the Roman primacy of divine origin? and (2) is this still a matter for scholastic disputation or is it an article of faith?' (46–7). McSorley contends at this point Erasmus held the primacy of the pope as *de iure divino* and produces evidence to support his thesis. From the few statements in *Ecclesiastes* it is not possible to establish this argument as firmly.

327 Book 1 343. One steady refrain throughout *Ecclesiastes* is Erasmus' insistence on subordinating one's will to that of the church and refraining from stirring up rebellion and sedition against it, for this is great impiety.

only obliquely in *Ecclesiastes*. Yet, it seems to have become clear to Erasmus in the late 1520s and 1530s that only a hierarchical structure of authority could guarantee 'peace and concord' among the members of Christ's body in these years of worsening schism, despite the fact that historically some individual popes such as Julius II (1503–17) had been less than exemplary occupants of the chair of Peter.[328] True obedience and the need for Christian peace and concord, Erasmus repeatedly urges, compel one to submit to all legitimate authority, from councils to papal decrees, to legitimate secular authority; for without submission there cannot be lasting peace and tranquillity. Ultimately it is consensus among bishops that matters; so it is fitting 'to observe reverently what the public authority of the church has prescribed, especially in universal councils, and what has been approved by public and long-standing observance, nor should one scorn the instructions that popes have given on just grounds for the public good.'[329] Though Erasmus allows wide room for theological views that have not been defined by church councils, he maintains that once definitions have been made and judgments pronounced the limits of theological dissent have been reached.[330]

Erasmus is mindful that over the centuries the practical functions of bishops in their dioceses changed considerably, and to a large extent he concedes that the modifications in the original episcopal practices had been necessary. Looking historically at the evolution of the episcopacy, he observes

* * * * *

328 See eg *Julius exclusus* CWE 27 155–97; *Sileni Alcibiadis* in Olin *Catholic Reformation* 79: 'In the same way they call the priests, bishops and Popes "the Church", when in reality they are only the servants of the Church. The Church is the whole Christian people, and Christ himself says it is too great to lie down before the bishops who serve it ...'; and 'but pray tell me, if there is any pleasure in hating the enemy of the Church, could there be any enemy more pernicious, more deadly than a wicked Pope?'

329 Book 4 CWE 68 1035; see also Erasmus' letter to Simon Pistoris (Basel, [c 2 September] 1526), Ep 1744:17–23, where he declares, 'It is important to distinguish different kinds of church decrees. Some come from a general council, some from rescripts, some belong to the bishops, some to the Roman pontiff but have the character of a ruling, like the constitutions of the Camera. Again, some of the decrees of synods are permanent, some temporary. Similarly, some are inviolable – those, for example, that rest on Holy Scripture; some can be altered to suit the circumstances ...' For Pistoris, see Simon Pistoris CEBR III 96–7.

330 On the question of the limits of theological debate in Erasmus' writings, see Manfred Hoffmann 'Erasmus and Religious Tolerance' ERSY 2 (1982) 80–106; Myron P. Gilmore '*De modis disputandi*: The Apologetic Works of Erasmus' in *Florilegium Historiale: Essays Presented to Wallace K. Ferguson* ed J.G. Rowe and W.H. Stockdale (Toronto 1971) 62–88. See also Stupperich 354–7.

that in the early church only the bishop taught, but afterwards teaching was transferred to presbyters, 'outstanding ones,' however, 'and not indefinitely.'[331] St Augustine, for example, assumed this role for Valerian, his ordinary, who was not a native speaker of Latin; lacking Augustine's eloquence, the bishop prudently invited him to teach in his stead.[332] But historically much changed after the time of Augustine 'since today a single city requires several preachers,'[333] and 'this role is widely delegated to monks and presbyters.'[334] It has fallen therefore to bishops that they must not only be trained in Scripture and preach well but they must make it a principal concern to admit suitable people to that office and 'remove the unsuitable.'[335] Erasmus sees this new duty of the bishop as taking on an even greater importance than his regular preaching, for in this way the bishop can supply his diocese with good preachers in all his churches, something he himself cannot do personally, given the numerous parishes and other venues requiring continual pastoral attention.

Another reason for this historical change in the bishop's responsibilities, according to Erasmus, is the moral degeneration that has set in since the early church.[336] Once it was the bishop alone who preached daily; but

* * * * *

331 Book 1 328; see also Jedin II 646, where the Council of Vaison (529) 'presided over by Caesarius [of Arles], expressly gave to the priests in the country the right of preaching, which at the same time meant the duty of preaching . . .'

332 Book 1 328. See Possidius *Life of St. Augustine* FOC 15 78–9. In the preface to the Froben edition of Augustine's *Opera* (1529), Erasmus singles out the bishop of Hippo as exceptionally notable for his dedication to the office of preaching. See the letter to Alonso de Fonseca (Freiburg [May] 1529), Ep 2157:26–31: 'But I do not think there is another Doctor whom that rich and generous Spirit has endowed so abundantly with all his gifts as Augustine. It is as though he wanted to paint on a single canvas a picture of the model bishop, complete with all the qualities that Peter and Paul, following Christ, the prince of bishops, demand of those who undertake to feed the Lord's flock.' See also lines 152–5: 'But especially in education, which is the most important function of a bishop, there was such a many-sided brilliance in him that there is no one, among either Greek or Latin writers, whom we could put alongside him in this role.'

333 Book 1 343

334 Erasmus' reference to monks includes above all the mendicant orders (Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians, and Carmelites); see book 1 443 and n1252.

335 Book 1 344

336 On Erasmus' view of the decay of church and society over time, see also Ep 858:530–632; and *Ratio* 249, where he compares the charity of the early

'after what belonged to one began to be distributed to many as human charity grew colder, that which was the chief function of a presbyter, namely teaching the people the precepts of the Lord, was now delegated to preachers.'[337] Erasmus sees the history of the church as a continuous descent from its spiritual apogee in the time of Christ, the early Christian writers, and first bishops of the church, after which 'sincerity decreased and luxury increased among evangelists,'[338] and most clergy not only lost the sense of the preaching office's tremendous significance but received no training in Scripture or skills in speaking. Whereas in the apostolic age the church 'grew strong and spread, flourished and reached the pinnacle of piety,'[339] afterwards it began its troubled decline, losing its fervour until at length 'religion became narrowly restricted and so devoid of passion that you would hardly say it was the same church.'[340] Erasmus notes caustically that today all one needs to preach is 'an ashen robe, a black or white mantle.'[341] Every sort of person – the young, the irresponsible, the ignorant – is admitted, sometimes even leaps up, to make sacred orations, as though nothing were easier than to expound divine Scripture to the people, and as though it were quite enough 'to put off all shame and set their tongue rolling.'[342] He gives Jan Becker the remedy for this disease: 'Make it your business to instill Christ pure and simple into the minds of your flock, for that we see done by very few.'[343] It is therefore one of *Ecclesiastes'* chief lessons that everyone teaching the Lord's flock 'must remember that he is occupied in an office that far surpasses the dignity of a king and that is primarily in a bishop, who is greater than any king, certainly in so far as the sublimity of his office is

* * * * *

church with charity of his day: where once there were no ceremonies, they now abound; then there was no mention of ceremonies, but now with ceremonies everywhere superstition thrives.

337 Book 1 149–50. For Erasmus' view of history, see the bibliography provided by *Humanismus und Historiographie* ed Hilmar A. Buck (Weinheim 1991); and see P. Bietenholz *History and Biography in Erasmus of Rotterdam* (Geneva 1966); *L'Histoire au temps de la Renaissance* ed M. Jones-Davies (Paris 1995).

338 Book 1 370; see also Ep 1334:384–407. Erasmus' view of the church's history is also succinctly treated below; see book 3 CWE 68 728–9 and n22. For this question, see Ralph Keen 'The Allure of the Past: Religious Reform and the Recovery of Ancient Ideals' ERSY 26 (2006) 16–28; and Augustijn *Erasmus* 84–6.

339 Book 3 CWE 68 728

340 Book 3 CWE 68 729. For the same 'Renaissance perspective' see introduction CWE 61 xxii–xxiii.

341 Book 1 327

342 Book 1 252

343 Letter to Jan Becker of Borsele (Louvain, 24 April 1519), Ep 952:51–2

concerned.'[344] All others who preach, whether mendicants, secular clergy, or suffragan bishops, assist the bishop as delegates in his office as teacher. And it falls upon the bishop to provide the best preachers possible; after all, he 'himself is in danger . . . since he will render an account to the Lord for each sheep.'[345]

To prepare preachers, Erasmus envisions a kind of comprehensive *paideia*[346] commencing in the candidates' earliest years and continuing throughout life, much like the career of St Jerome.[347] Convinced that 'almost the whole corruption of character comes from a corrupted education'[348] and that 'we do most sucessfully what we have learned to do since childhood,' he advocates shaping the excellent preacher 'right from infancy.'[349] And because 'talent betrays itself by tokens right in earliest youth,'[350] he urges parents and bishops to identify early on those children with 'natural inclinations' for preaching that they might profitably employ the best years in life for memory retention, correct learning and pronunciation, and embracing 'the

* * * * *

344 Book 1 329

345 Book 1 345; see also Heb 13:17; John 10:11–16 and 21:15–17; cf Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2–4.

346 See Erasmus *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 291–346, which Froben published in September 1529 after Erasmus had moved from Basel to Freiburg im Breisgau; it emphasizes the need for parents to undertake their children's liberal arts education as early as possible: 'You will see to it that your son makes his first acquaintance with a liberal education immediately, while his mind is still uncorrupted and free from distractions, while he is in his most formative and impressionable years, and while his spirit is still open to each and every influence and at the same time highly retentive of what it has grasped; for we remember nothing in old age as well as what we absorbed during our unformed years' (297).

347 See *Vita Hieronymi* CWE 61 15–62.

348 Book 2 CWE 68 622. Erasmus notes in *Paraclesis* (in Olin 105): 'For that which the new earthen pot of the soul first imbibes settles most deeply and clings most tenaciously. Let the first lispings utter Christ, let earliest childhood be formed by the Gospels of him whom I would wish particularly presented in such a way that children also might love him.'

349 Book 1 297–8 and 326; see also Quintilian 1.1.1–36; and Plutarch *De liberis educandis* 3E: 'For youth is impressionable and plastic and while such minds are still tender lessons are infused deeply into them; but anything which has become hard is with difficulty softened.' See too Erasmus *Vita Hieronymi* CWE 61 25 and *Enchiridion* CWE 66 85: 'Children should imbibe convictions worthy of Christ, because nothing sinks more deeply into the mind or adheres to it more tenaciously than that which is instilled in it in early years, as Quintilian says.'

350 Book 2 CWE 68 484

precepts of living rightly.'[351] He supports this idea with examples from the lives of eloquent preachers: St Bernard's mother provided a model of schooling, for 'she educated her son as if she were preparing him for solitude, not the court';[352] and Athanasius was 'educated this way in the bishop's house, for bishops' homes were once schools of piety, whence they were also called monasteries.'[353] In good schools future preachers would meditate upon the law of the Lord, and 'if appropriate, careful, and correct instruction' were 'added to these natural inclinations, there is great hope that, with the protection of the Holy Spirit, we shall have suitable heralds of God's word.'[354] The preacher's career thus begins in the school of piety under careful parental and episcopal supervision.

The school Erasmus envisions is a bishop's collegium for generating qualified preachers to herald the good news of the gospel.[355] Responsibility for founding and maintaining it falls to the bishop, whose intention should be 'that chosen talents may be trained there not just for logical argument but much more for preaching.'[356] Erasmus may well have recalled the various colleges with which he was personally familiar at the universities of Paris and Cambridge, which trained clerics, but he certainly would have had more in mind the colleges supported by exemplary clergymen such as John Fisher, William Warham, David of Burgundy,[357] and John Colet.[358] His

* * * * *

351 Book 2 CWE 68 589; and *Vita Hieronymi* CWE 61 25

352 Book 2 CWE 68 622

353 Book 2 CWE 68 622; cf *Ratio* 256.

354 Book 2 CWE 68 485

355 A good view of the curriculum and purpose of such a collegium is found in Erasmus' *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* (1518) CWE 71 33–84, which deals with Erasmus' understanding of 'the three [scriptural] languages and ... the approach to theological studies' (37).

356 Book 1 352

357 Book 1 345. David, formerly bishop of Utrecht, the natural son of duke Philip the Good (great-grandfather of Charles V), ordained Erasmus a priest in 1492; see CEBR I 226–7; see also Schoeck (1) 109–10. For Erasmus' esteem of Warham, see book 1 352–5 and Ep 326:124–9.

358 See also his dedicatory letter to John Colet in *De copia* CWE 24 especially 284: 'You founded a school that far excels the rest in beauty and splendour, so that the youth of England, under carefully chosen and highly reputed teachers, might there absorb Christian principles together with an excellent literary education for their earliest years. For you are profoundly aware both that the hope of the country lies in its youth – the crop in the blade, as it were – and also how important it is for one's whole life that one should be initiated into excellence from the very cradle onwards.'

experiences at the Collège de Montaigu, on the other hand, seem to have provided him with a useful corrective for how not to organize such an institution. More concretely, we get a glimpse of Erasmus' idea of the collegium if we examine the plans he shared with Jérôme de Busleyden for establishing at the University of Louvain a Collegium Trilingue for teaching Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, the three languages required for competence in Scripture and professional preaching.[359] Fisher, Warham, David of Burgundy, and Colet were in Erasmus' estimation true pastors who cared deeply that young men under their tutelage and destined for the priesthood become effective preachers. Since their dioceses had grown too large for them to preach in every church, they believed their weightiest responsibility was to provide their flocks with suitable preachers by carefully selecting young men 'who have given unambiguous evidence that they would one day be able to serve as a good preacher'; it should be 'first and foremost among their concerns.'[360] Neglecting this responsibility, Erasmus notes, has been 'the source from which the greatest part of the church's calamities flows.'[361]

Erasmus envisions this collegium as a rigorous religious and academic institution not only set apart from the vices and concerns of the world but differing from the type of (scholastic) education where 'those who receive long training in theological disputations come out clever in argument, very, very few suited to preaching.'[362] His episcopal school takes a refreshingly

* * * * *

359 See Schoeck (2) 194–5. See *Ratio* 181, where on Augustine's authority in *De doctrina christiana* (2.11) Erasmus attests to the importance of learning Greek and Hebrew. Erasmus also identifies Etienne Poncher, one-time bishop of Paris and then of Sens, who offered abundant rewards for teachers of these languages; see *Ratio* 181–2. On the Collegium Trilingue at Louvain, see Henry de Vocht *History of the Foundation and the Rise of the Collegium Trilingue Lovaniense, 1517–1550* Humanistica Lovaniensia 10–13, 4 vols (Louvain 1951–5) and his *Jérôme de Busleyden* Humanistica Lovaniensia 9 (Turnhout 1950) 4–8; see also M. Nauwelaerets 'Érasme à Louvain. Éphémérides d'un séjour de 1517 à 1521' in *Scrinium* 1 3–24, especially 9–10. See especially *Epithalamium* CWE 39 527 n19 and the introduction to CWE 63 xlvii: Erasmus' 'own efforts to tackle Hebrew do not appear to have been especially successful'; see also xlviii. Cf book 2 CWE 68 486: 'Though Hebrew occupies the first rank of these three, its usefulness is circumscribed by the narrowest of limits . . .'

360 Book 1 344. Erasmus says of Fisher that he used the 'huge sum of money' given him by King Henry VIII's paternal grandmother for 'the training of preachers or on providing comfort for the needy.' See Ep 3036 to Christoph von Stadion, 6 August 1535 (244).

361 Book 1 344

362 Book 1 352

new direction. The programme would differentiate sharply between genuine theological training and training in dialectic for theological investigation and disputation. Excellent teachers would be retained whose loving care would render suitable pupils docile and instill in them a love of virtue and a solid foundation in Scripture and the humanities.[363] The future preacher would be trained to be, as it were, the wise generalist (very much the model orator of Cicero's and Quintilian's world), not one who had accumulated huge amounts of information or skills in dialectic but who had 'learned what is best and most necessary' – 'the most outstanding out of what is best';[364] the pupil's aim would be not to master everything comprehensively but handle competently 'those things that are most suited to the office of teaching.'[365] Dialectic would emphatically be an important part of this education, but only to a point. The future preacher would learn dialectic 'for making correct judgments about truth and falsehood'[366] and 'adapting the subtlety of dialectic to the capacity of the congregation and elevate to a loftier meaning whatever seems too humble';[367] he would also have a firm knowledge of the ancient sources, though he would 'have them learned rather than be learning them, and have them learned rather than thoroughly learned, in order to avoid the fate of those many who, as the study becomes more attractive day by day, grow old there as if at the Sirens' rocks; and, as

* * * * *

363 Book 1 370–1; cf Quintilian 2.3.10–12: 'The teacher should therefore be as distinguished for his eloquence as for his good character, and like Phoenix in the *Iliad* be able to teach his pupil both how to behave and how to speak.' (2.3.12). See also Plutarch *De liberis educandis* 4B: 'Teachers must be sought for the children who are free from scandal in their lives, who are unimpeachable in their manners, and in experience the very best that may be found.'

364 Book 1 326; book 2 CWE 68 481. Erasmus recognizes the need for learning dialectic but emphasizes that one should be moderate in doing so and not be like 'those who waste a good part, or indeed all, of their time in the labyrinthine intricacies of Aristotle or Averroes or Scotus and on sophistical hair-splitting and trivial questions which serve no useful purpose?' (letter to Noël Béda [Basel, 15 June 1525], Ep 1581:589–92, quoted by Mark Crane). For the difference between the scholastic and the humanist approach to church reform, see Mark Crane 'Competing Visions of Christian Reform: Noël Béda and Erasmus' ERSY 25 (2005) 39–57.

365 Book 1 326

366 Book 2 CWE 68 613

367 Book 2 CWE 68 714; see also book 4 CWE 68 1097 where Erasmus recommends scholastic disputes for assisting the preacher in teaching theological dogmas, but he advises that 'scholastic disputes ... should be conducted soberly and rely especially upon scriptural foundations.'

Augustine advises, one takes no pleasure in quarreling.'[368] All this recalls Erasmus' earlier ideas and practice of education, as well as his description of St Jerome's education. Because life was too short to master even a minute amount of what was good and worthy of human investigation, why spend all one's time on the modern scholastic theologians and neglect the study of grammar, languages, and the orators?[369] It was imperative that one learn to discriminate in this early on with prudent direction by teachers who can bring forth the flowers of their subjects.

Ecclesiastes further recommends that essential texts be known thoroughly, beginning with Scripture and the best of the church Fathers, and in these the preacher should be exercised continuously.[370] But good pedagogy is not just a matter of excellent subject matter; it is even more how one keeps a young man's heart centred on what is good so that his 'senses be trained for the contemplation of the intelligible' and that he possess 'a mind pure and untroubled by any human emotions.'[371] Here, of course, engendering piety is the central ambition, for, as Erasmus argues in *Ratio*, a great part of theological learning depends on the piety of the individual, and he who does not love what he reads and says cannot truly be a theologian.[372] The educator's goal then is to foster the right attitude towards his subjects; he would not allow the aspiring preacher to engage in the rhetorical exercise of speaking on either side of an argument or of treating frivolous or discreditable subjects. Instead, future preachers would dwell on what is good and useful as piety demands. In the end they are to be transformed by what

* * * * *

368 Book 2 CWE 68 612; Erasmus notes this of Jerome in *Vita Hieronymi* CWE 61 27; cf Plutarch *De liberis educandis* 7A–F.

369 *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* CWE 71 31–82. Erasmus emphasizes the point repeatedly in this work; see eg 77–8: 'But I have heard the best theologians making the same complaint as Pico, and lamenting not that they had spent time on scholastic theology but that they had spent so much time on this one field of study and this alone.' See *Ratio* 296–7.

370 Cf *Ratio* 296.

371 Book 4 CWE 68 1080. Erasmus does not condemn human emotions; as he notes in *Ratio* 216, Christ had human emotions: 'quod [Christus] humanis affectibus tangitur.' However he distinguishes between good and bad ones, those that move us to the love of Christ and neighbour, and those needing to be removed thoroughly from our hearts; see his discussion of these in *Ratio* 227–36.

372 Erasmus here adds a bold clarification to his statement in *Paraclesis* (in Olin 97–9) on who really can be called a theologian: 'And if anyone under the inspiration of the spirit of Christ preaches this kind of doctrtine, inculcates it, exhorts, incites, and encourages men to it, he indeed is truly a theologian, even if he should be a common labourer or weaver . . .'

they learn, which, as Erasmus saw it, was the essential difference between the scholastics' schools and the bishops' seminaries of learned godliness.

Erasmus envisioned a school that would be dedicated to the practice and perfection of oratorical rhetoric: that is, delivery (*actio*), or, as Quintilian put it, *pronunciatio*,[373] and Demosthenes 'action' (ὑπόκρισις) – public speaking. There one would not merely learn soberly the mental dexterity for sound judgment to 'enable what has come into question to be explained more quickly and more easily through it,'[374] but acquire a facility in speaking before a congregation of persons of various backgrounds. Given the right conditions, in such schools the novice's native abilities would flourish; and 'when this ability has been acquired by human industry, the richer grace of the Spirit comes over it, and instead of depleting it completes it, instead of taking it away assists it.'[375] Given that, to the extent the preacher earnestly devotes himself to the task of preaching well, the Holy Spirit does not refuse its increment, a young man may be assured that God will somehow further in his own mysterious way every honourable measure that the preacher takes to improve his speaking abilities.

The collegium Erasmus proposes also promised considerable practical advantages for sacred oratory. Like the *paideia* of ancient Rome, which took place in practical settings where youth could witness their fathers, mentors, and notable orators hold forth in the courts and public gatherings,[376] Erasmus' collegium would expose youth to frequent sermons and other types of oratory. Away from the allurements of the city and the vices of society and severed from worldly business, they would 'spend time among those who speak purely and elegantly, listen to preachers valued for the grace of their language,' and 'pour over the books of those who have been valued for their eloquence in the vulgar tongue, like Dante and Petrarch.'[377] They could read the best literature of the Greek and Latin authors, and even enjoy authors writing in the vernacular. Students would learn to remember and recite what they had heard, analyze a sermon's structure, divisions, themes, handling of Scripture, apothegms, and so forth. Study and practice would

* * * * *

373 Quintilian 11.3 passim; see 11.3.1: '*Delivery* [*pronuntiatio*] is often styled *action* [*actio*], but the first name is derived from the voice, the second from the gesture. For Cicero in one passage speaks of *action* as being a *form of speech*, and in another as being *a kind of physical eloquence*.'

374 Book 2 CWE 68 614

375 Book 2 CWE 68 470

376 See Pliny *Epistles* 8.14.4–6. See also Cicero *Pro Caelio* 4.9–11 for his words on mentoring Caelius in the forensic arts.

377 Book 2 CWE 68 488

endow the student with the power to discriminate among preachers, criticize a sermon's shortcomings in a courteous and constructive way, identify what was excellent, and of course appropriate what was best. Like the patrician youth of ancient Rome, the school for preachers would be one where the practice of public speaking took prominent place.

As important as theological education was for the preacher's work, the pursuit of godliness (*pietas*) was paramount. Because the *ecclesiastes* was entrusted with the noblest calling of instructing others in godliness, so godliness had to be fostered in these *collegia* before all else so that the young man 'render his heart the purest possible source of speech';[378] for it is from the pure heart that divine knowledge is acquired and grows, and only with such a heart can one speak words of the divine Spirit and be 'instructed by God' (θεοδίδακτος).[379] The lifelong training of the preacher therefore would begin with acquiring that purity of heart which alone distinguished the perfect Christian orator. To this, Erasmus adds, the preacher must be like David, begging the Lord for a threefold spirit: 'an upright spirit against the attacks of temptations, a holy spirit to inflame the minds of others also and bring them over to sanctity, and a principal spirit, or "a powerful spirit" as Jerome translates it ... for the richness of perfection.'[380] This 'principal' spirit would provide courage lest the speaker succumb to flattering those in power or caving in to the pressures, influence, and threats of the mighty; it is what one might call today the courage to speak truth to power, as Peter and the other apostles displayed on Pentecost when 'strengthened now by the principal spirit, they were not frightened by any threats of the wicked or cast down by any afflictions or elated or puffed up by any honours ...'[381]

* * * * *

378 Book 1 260, 255 n36

379 1 Thess 4:9 (θεοδίδακτοι); cf Isa 54:13 and *Ratio* 179. See too the character Theodidactus in *Convivium religiosum* who gives brief words on whether one would wish 'to be a child again if he could ...' *Colloquia* CWE 39 193.

380 Book 1 263–4. Note the difference in Jerome's translation of Ps 50:14 according to the LXX: *et spiritu principali confirma me* and according to the Hebrew *et spiritu potenti confirma me*. Erasmus is obviously aware of both renderings, but prefers the LXX's rendering, πνεύματι ἡγεμονικῷ 'principal' as the word ἡγεμονικόν conveys the ancient philosophical idea of the power of self-control and self-mastery. DV translates the phrase as 'strengthen me with a perfect spirit'; RSV (Ps 51:12): 'uphold me with a willing spirit.' On the Stoic concept of ἡγεμονικόν, see *De libero arbitrio* CWE 76 61 n288.

381 Book 1 264; see too Erasmus' quotation about the silence of preachers in his day: 'About the most insane wars which for so many years now embroil everything sacred and profane the theologians are silent, the preachers say nothing. And here was the broadest field for straining every sinew' (CWE 61 xxxii).

It is in essence the fortitude to preach the word worthily; it is a gift of the Holy Spirit[382] and its nourishment constant: ardent prayers, good works, and 'the food of the gospel's teaching.'[383] The result of this education will be the worthy preacher whose 'sole pursuit, sole glory is to have felt that the Holy Spirit has set the people on fire with a love of godliness through himself as the instrument.'[384] The product of the new episcopal school is the reformed preacher – godly, learned, zealous, accommodating, yet uncompromising when speaking on behalf of his Lord who directs the universe.

Hubert Jedin and Jacques Chomarat have discerned in Erasmus' thoughts on the new episcopal school an outline of the Catholic seminaries that would emerge from the reform decrees of the Council of Trent. Perhaps it is not going too much further to say as well that the programme of clerical education Erasmus enunciates in *Ecclesiastes*, which envisioned providing churches with 'preachers endowed with the evangelical virtues,'[385] adumbrates the harvest of exceptional preachers to emerge from these 'seminaries' in the post-Tridentine world of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.'[386] And it is perhaps not too much to say in addition that so much of the brilliance of preaching in the decades after *Ecclesiastes'* appearance and in the post-Tridentine years owes no small debt to this seminal work on sacred oratory.[387]

One other principal aim of *Ecclesiastes* is to provide preachers with a comprehensive strategy for calling fallen humanity – Christians, Jews, heretics, non-believers, schismatics – to the pursuit of godliness.[388] The treatise would have preachers make all persons understand their proper, rightly ordered hierarchical relationship to God, his church, society, and all legitimate authority, so that at the end of salvation history, as Erasmus makes clear in book 4, cosmic harmony would be restored through obedience to God's law, which all creation will then obey. This in turn would redound to

* * * * *

382 Cf Isa 11:2–3.
383 Book 1 268
384 Book 3 CWE 68 811
385 Important of course for Erasmus was staffing these colleges with 'learned and godly men capable of moulding the young and dropping the seeds of Christian devotion upon their tender minds. The reflowering of evangelical vigour in the people rests particularly with these persons' (book 1 370).
386 See Council of Trent, Session 23, Canon 18 in Tanner I 750–3.
387 For the reform and revolution in sacred eloquence after the Council of Trent, see Fumaroli 116–423.
388 See John W. O'Malley's general introduction to Erasmus' works on *spiritualia*, CWE 66 ix–li, especially the section on *pietas* (xv–xxi).

God's glory, with all persons returning to their created purpose – to know, fear, and love the Creator.[389] The preacher's special activity thus lies in bringing minds to understand God's law in its many vestiges; for once they apprehend this, human beings will ardently cooperate with God's abundant grace to obey his commands and seek the reform of life. This strategy of reform for bringing about true godliness begins by engendering a hatred of sin and the personal and social disorders that result from it; it then promotes faith and charity until it culminates in the perfection of the virtues. Despite his disappointment at the religious dissension and the dissolution of society about him that he felt towards the end of his life, Erasmus continued to hold on strongly to his deep belief that God's invitation to godliness is offered to all persons, all races, men and women, clergy and laity alike, all religions, and that a reform will at some point come about. And for those who embrace this reform the rewards are beyond all measure: 'the peace of a mind at ease with itself, freedom of the spirit, having peace with God, communion with all the saints, becoming a child of God instead of the devil's slave, the spiritual solace that the prophet says cannot be conceived by man.'[390] Collectively, at the end of time the final result of the preacher's work will be a restoration of that pristine cosmic order as it was *ab initio*.

Erasmus gives most attention to godliness (*pietas*) in treating the vices and virtues, where he situates it under equity or (commutative and distributive) justice, 'the virtue by which we assign to each what is owed.'[391] This virtue conforms to the ancients' teaching on 'the honourable' (*honestum*), which 'includes right and wrong, whether according to nature or contrary to

* * * * *

389 Book 2 635. For 'fear of the Lord,' cf Isa 11:2–3; it is the last of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Fear of God is fundamental in Erasmus' idea of spiritual progress, which ends in embracing *pietas* as fully as one can. See eg Erasmus' example of a sermon on the paralytic (Matt 9:2–8; Luke 5:17–26): 'Fear of God is a big step towards piety' (book 3 CWE 68 889). See also Jean Vitrier's Homily 19, in Godin *Spiritualité* 198: 'On peult demander: que esse de pieté? Sainct Augustin dit que c'est service de Dieu, car pieté est une vertu qui a compassion de aultrui. Comment y a ilz en Dieu quelque chose dont ilz faille avoir pieté? Non, mais la creature n'est jamais sy amollie, ne touchié en l'afection, que de considerer la bonté et magnificence de Dieu nostre createur, laquelle chose est appellee pieté. C'est une grande inpieté de sentir mal contre les parolle de Dieu et que on ne les croit, ne aime et que on ayme plus ung peu de bien qu'i donne en ce monde, que ce qu'ilz promet. Pieté dont est service de Dieu. Sainct Augustin dit que par foy, esperanche, et charité, on sert a Dieu.'

390 Book 3 CWE 68 783; cf Cicero *De officiis* 1 and passim.

391 Book 3 CWE 68 858; cf Rummel *Erasmus* 54–7.

nature, piety and impiety towards God and the saints, towards one's country, towards parents and children ... all the categories of virtues and vices, which are countless ...'[392] Under this consideration Christ provides us with 'the perfect model ... of all the virtues in which there was no flaw or defect commingled.'[393] In the fullness of his virtues one may contemplate that perfect godliness that embraces 'every affection, adoration, and all the duties that we owe to those from whom we have received life.'[394]

Considering humanity in relation to God, Erasmus envisions an ideal hierarchical moral order measured in debts and obligations, where 'the highest devotion is owed to God, to whom we owe whatever we are, the next to our homeland, the third to our parents and children, the fourth to our teachers and catechists, who are in a sense the parents of our minds, the fifth to those by whose kindness we have been saved from death or otherwise very grave dangers. All these are categories of justice.'[395] True godliness therefore discerns the appropriate relationships in this divinely ordered moral world of multiple hierarchies – between ourselves and God, ourselves and those who have jurisdiction over our lives, ourselves and all other persons of our world. In this vision the powers of the church and society exist ideally in reciprocal relations determined exactly according to status, each created to serve its constituency, and each constituent to serve its designated authorities; for 'it has pleased God, out of his love for peace and concord, that inferiors should obey their superiors ...'[396] With God's grace we give to each what each legitimately has a right to expect from us; and each of us in turn carries out his responsibilities to those he has been ordained to serve. The preacher will call his audience's attention to these lawful arrangements, urging each to give to the other his due; and as each person does so, each complies in godliness with the dictates of divine justice.[397]

* * * * *

392 Book 2 CWE 68 548; cf Plutarch *De liberis educandis* 7A–F; and the introduction to *De puritate tabernaculi* CWE 65 219.

393 Book 4 CWE 68 1039. Erasmus believes that a deficiency in one of the virtues suggests a corruption of all the virtues; see eg *De puritate tabernaculi* CWE 65 258–9: 'To walk without blemish, to do what is right, to speak the truth in one's heart, and all the other things which he enumerated. For they are all connected, and if any one of them is lacking then the rest are invalidated.' Cf Cicero *De amicitia* 22.83.

394 Book 4 CWE 68 1047

395 Book 4 CWE 68 1047

396 See book 3 CWE 68 907. For a look at Erasmus' view of Christian society, see Ep 858 to Paul Volz.

397 Book 3 CWE 68 906–8 and book 4 CWE 68 passim

Further underlying Erasmus' teaching on godliness is his awareness of the vast multiplicity of God's creation and that each person has a unique calling from God and unique relationships with others in this world; these define each individual in his or her own station in life, and maintaining these relationships properly is crucial to right order in church and society.[398] It must therefore be the preacher's aim to awaken in each person an understanding of that particular end for which he or she has been called, as he notes, 'Great happiness would accrue in human affairs if each person kept his eye upon his target, not the one that desire has proposed, but the one that God and honourable thought has put before him.'[399] Despite there being so many human beings adrift in the morass of sinfulness, each nonetheless has some recognition, however faintly, of his or her moral dislocation and sinfulness. Each person therefore is to be aroused from sloth and moved to godliness, to show fitting gratitude for the blessings God has given and the circumstances into which he or she has been placed in this world, no matter how rich or lowly one may be. Understanding one's divinely appointed station is therefore the first step towards correcting the disorder vis-à-vis God and neighbour; for this reason especially the preacher himself must first understand the profound importance of his own calling and be awoken from spiritual sleep that he might awaken others.

Among the ancients the axiom that one could only move another if he himself were moved first goes to the heart of Erasmus' understanding of what makes the excellent preacher. He tells Jacques Masson (Jacobus Latomus) that 'according to Quintilian "A man who is not ablaze himself will never set others afire, nor will one who does not feel grief himself succeed in arousing it in others." So a theologian who has not felt the touch of the Spirit does not touch others with his words. He does not inspire others unless he himself is inspired.'[400] Indeed, if Erasmus leaves his readers with one lesson, it is that each preacher should know that 'nothing is more effective for stirring devout emotions than having experienced godly feelings yourself and nothing more useful for calming evil emotions than having been foreign to them.'[401] The first step to being moved is the awakening

* * * * *

398 See book 4 CWE 68 passim.

399 Book 2 CWE 68 635

400 *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* CWE 71 55; see Quintilian 6.2.26. For Jacques Masson (Jacobus Latomus), see CEBR II 304–5. See eg Horace *Ars poetica* 102–3: 'If you would have me weep, you must first feel grief yourself'; Cicero *De divinatione* 1.37.80.

401 Book 2 CWE 68 804

from spiritual death, as 'the source of all vices comes from the fact that human weakness obeys the flesh more than the spirit.'[402] For this the preacher must excel at impressing upon hearers' emotions and minds the infinite distance between the Supreme Good and their own sinfulness. He must 'stir the emotions,'[403] shake them so that sinners detest their disordered condition and vices, whether selfishness, greed, drunkenness, debauchery, indolence. Quintilian observed that 'it is in its power over the emotions that the life and soul of oratory is to be found';[404] and it is the preacher's special duty to drive out the baser emotions with ones of a noble sort, 'like a nail with a nail.'[405]

Stirring (*movere*) the emotions therefore is the preacher's craft, which is what so many of *Ecclesiastes*' instructions intend to refine; as Erasmus puts it, it must be the zealous preacher's goal 'to leave in the minds of his listeners barbs that hold fast and to scatter upon them, as it were, good seed on good ground, so that it exercises its power gradually until it bursts forth into the fruit of piety.'[406] The preacher's activity thus becomes an occasion of grace; moving the emotions over time, if done well (and not by using foolish gimmicks),[407] will impel hearers 'towards the characteristics of godliness, when they are inspired through the praise of harmony towards love of concord and hatred of schism, when by praise of alms they are inflamed towards generosity to the needy and scorn for greed, and when by praise of innocence they are kindled towards a zeal for piety and the love of a more reformed life.'[408] Preaching against vices and promoting the virtues fosters *pietas* (and is itself a work of *pietas*), for the elimination of vices and the acquisition of virtues are a society's key index of its right relation to God. For this reason too the preacher is directed especially to attack those vices that cause disorder in society rather than the persons who have fallen prey to them.[409] All this of course presupposes faith that, where preaching is done simply and sincerely, God's grace will be abundantly available for those who propose to amend their lives.

* * * * *

402 Book 4 CWE 68 1053
403 Book 3 CWE 68 766, 795
404 Quintilian 6.2.7
405 *Adagia* I ii 4 *Clavem clavo pelere* 'To drive out one nail by another' (CWE 31 148–9).
406 Book 3 CWE 68 806
407 Book 3 CWE 68 766
408 Book 3 CWE 68 722–3
409 See book 3 CWE 68 860, 1002–3, 1014.

If it is honourable and godly that each person render to others in the measure one has received, then in relation to God humanity is infinitely at a loss. Not only unresponsive and steeped in injustice, humanity also suffers from an even greater debt because to God and Christ is owed what no mortal could ever repay, as there exists no proportion between the infinite and the finite,[410] between the immensity of God's gift in Christ and what any human being, even one with the warmest, most generous heart, could possibly render in return. Here the preacher's task is to make listeners aware of the enormous chasm between God's infinite beneficence and their own contemptible forgetfulness of God, the giver and provider of all good things. It is here, too, the Christian must begin to grasp God's immeasurable gift in Christ, in whose body alone humanity can be reconciled with the Father. For only through membership in the body of Christ can humanity repay the gift of God's infinite mercy and transcend the divide between oneself and God's infinite goodness.

Erasmus' well known criticisms of pseudopiety abound in *Ecclesiastes*, but his attacks are moderate when measured against many of his earlier works. Frequently he gives vent to criticism of empty rituals, the lifestyles of monks, and pretentions of those whom he sees as claiming to have 'renounced the world' (as if other Christians do not do so in their baptismal vows).[411] He may question whether Benedict or Francis ever prescribed a specific garment for their respective orders[412] and criticize the spiritual impoverishment of the monastic life where 'not a word [is said] about the pursuit of piety.'[413] Certain words appearing frequently in the Scriptures but distorted over time still provoke biting responses that can go on at length;[414] words like 'world,' 'religious,' 'brother' and 'obedience,' 'perfection,' 'the flesh,' 'concupiscence,' 'heretic,' 'apostate' often act as hair triggers firing off sharp comments.[415] Many of the old refrains we hear repeated, for example, that religious life was 'invented by men,'[416] and that in Benedictine monasticism 'it is not permitted to make time for the Bible, or to aspire

* * * * *

410 See book 2 CWE 68 714.
411 See book 3 CWE 68 901. For Erasmus on the original state of monasticism, see *Vita Hieronymi* CWE 61 29; *De concordia* CWE 65 164; and Rummel 'Monachatus' passim.
412 See book 3 CWE 68 905. For extensive criticism on monastic garb, see 'The Well-to-do Beggars, πτωχοπλούσιοι in *Colloquia* CWE 39 468–98, especially 481–2.
413 See book 2 CWE 68 623.
414 See eg book 3 CWE 68 909, 1014; see as well his comments in Ep 858 to Paul Volz.
415 See book 3 CWE 68 1014.
416 See book 3 CWE 68 909–10; *Ratio* 265.

to a purer piety if someone happened to want to.'[417] But as elsewhere Erasmus' purpose in calling attention to practices and institutions that deviate from true godliness is to reset human and spiritual values in proper perspective;[418] often he makes clear his intention, 'I am not attacking the word "monk," which would be popular with all good people if the character of many of them had not made it odious. Moreover I would tolerate monastic brotherhoods, commending their institution with invented origins . . .'[419] 'Fasting in order to attune body to mind for the offices of piety is a holy work; fasting in order to be considered holy is hypocrisy.'[420] The increase of godliness – zealously pursuing an active spiritual life – therefore should ever be the proper end; whatever helps one pursue godliness effectively is good and should be judged on that basis. It is not the ritual, the fasting, praying, almsgiving, the pilgrimage, or the life of the monk as such, but how these dispose the heart and mind to carry out the obligations of true godliness (care for sick, love of neighbour, love of God, expansion of the heart . . .) that we find the spiritual measure of the exercise. With the significance of the preacher's moral status, purpose, and duties made clear, Erasmus proceeds to the next two books of his treatise to take up the precepts of oratory that the *ecclesiastes* should learn as well as possible.

Erasmus' purpose in books 2 and 3 of *Ecclesiastes*, as he says, is to allow readers to 'sample some of the rhetoricians' precepts that seem appropriate to the preacher's office.'[421] At the outset he makes clear that he is not laying down rules of rhetoric that the learner must know by rote; it is rather but 'a sampling' as he says of the most useful rhetorical precepts that the reader might appropriate in his own way and in his own time, without passing through the rigours of a formal education programme (though this might well be the formal plan of a bishop's collegium). Book 2 begins by explaining what the art of rhetoric is and how the preacher can use it to preach well, and then reviews the disciplines with which the *ecclesiastes* should have some familiarity, above all grammar, whose fundamental importance Erasmus cannot emphasize enough; 'the art of speaking correctly'[422] is key to

* * * * *

417 See book 2 CWE 68 623.

418 Erasmus does this in Ep 858 to Paul Volz.

419 See book 3 CWE 68 752. On this saying in Erasmus and the controversy it generated, see Rummel 'Monachatus' passim.

420 See book 2 CWE 68 635.

421 Book 2 CWE 68 496; see also Erasmus' letter to Christoph von Stadion (243), where he states it is to 'accommodate to preaching the precepts of the rhetoricians, logicians, and theologians.'

422 Book 2 CWE 68 474: 'Grammar is the art of speaking flawlessly' (*grammatica sit ars emendate loquendi*). See Quintilian 1.4.1–2: 'As soon as the boy has learned

every discipline and vital for preaching. Without it every effort at communication falters. The study of grammar in Erasmus' Europe and throughout the Renaissance was far more broadly conceived than it is today.[423] Grammarians of antiquity and humanists of the Renaissance viewed the subject as embracing an extensive knowledge of philology, history, poetry, antiquity, and, for Erasmus in particular, the three ancient languages – Hebrew, Greek, Latin.[424] Ideally, the young man entering the bishop's collegium for training would come well prepared in the fundamentals of the Latin language for correct writing and conversation. By the time he took up the advanced study of grammar, he would have reached the stage where he could begin what was known as the *studia humanitatis* (grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy).[425] Each of these disciplines was similarly vast in compass and required extensive study, as Erasmus observes: 'History,' for example,

* * * * *

to read and write without difficulty, it is the turn for the teacher of literature (*grammaticus*) ... This profession may be most briefly considered under two heads, the art of speaking correctly and the interpretation of the poets ...' By this Quintilian primarily understands common speaking and not public oratory, which comes under rhetoric; see also *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* CWE 71 81–2; and *De ratione studii* CWE 24 667–91. Speaking correctly means more than mere grammatical correctness; see Quintilian 1.6.27: 'It seems to me that the remark, that it is one thing to speak Latin and another to speak grammar, was far from unhappy' (*quare mihi non invenuste dici videtur, aliud esse Latine, aliud grammatice loqui*).

423 Book 2 CWE 68 480: Grammar 'embraces both history and poetry and knowledge of antiquity as well as knowledge of the three languages.' See also Henri Marrou *A History of Education in Antiquity* (New York 1956); Kaster *Guardians*; Black; Witt *Footsteps* 1–30; Grendler (1) 203–71, and Grendler (2) 199–205; see also his many pertinent articles in *Renaissance Education between Religion and Politics* Variorum Collected Studies Series CS845 (Aldershot 2006); O'Malley 'Grammar'; Stanley F. Bonner *Education in Ancient Rome: From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny* (Berkeley 1977) 189–211. See also O.B. Hardison 'The Orator and the Poet: The Dilemma of Humanist Literature' *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 1 (1971) 33–44.

424 See book 2 CWE 68 485–6. Erasmus contended against Latomus that a knowledge of these languages was necessary for interpreting Scripture. See *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* CWE 71 37–84, especially 41–56; and Georges Chantraine, 'L'Apologia ad Latomum: Deux conceptions de la théologie' in *Scrinium* II 51–75. See also *Ratio* 181–2. See also *De ratione studii* CWE 24 667–91.

425 See eg Hanna H. Gray 'Renaissance Humanism: The Pursuit of Eloquence' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 24 (1963) 497–514; William J. Bouwsma *The Culture of Renaissance Humanism* (Washington, DC 1973) passim; Black passim; Grendler (1) 203–71; W. Keith Percival 'The *Studia Humanitatis:* Renaissance Grammar' in Rabil III 67–83; John Monfasani 'Humanism and Rhetoric' in Rabil III 171–235.

'is simply blind without cosmography and arithmetic.'[426] The disciplines required time and diligence to acquire before one advanced to others.

For exercise in grammar Erasmus advocates reading the best of the ancient authors (*auctores*), those so advanced 'in the elegance of their language'[427] who demonstrated such correctness in speaking that all educated persons recognized their excellence. He advises boys to linger in grammar for some time, for in this one acquires an accuracy with words and in expressing their meaning; upon it every discipline depends, such as dialectic, which is 'blind without grammar,'[428] and above all the interpretation of Scripture. Erasmus demonstrates how particularly important grammar is by calling attention to the challenge words present as the names of (biblical) places and things have meanings that are often obscure, sometimes unknown, or have changed over time, 'as though nature's envy has taken care that there should be no sure knowledge of things that can be transmitted in writing to posterity with undoubtable fidelity, but require a particular experience of each of them.'[429] The exacting analysis of Scripture's obscurities demanded rigorous training in grammar and in languages, and even then one might never come to consensus, much less certainty, on what a passage – or even a particular word – of Scripture genuinely means, its true sense (*sensus germanus*). Yet it is the preacher's duty to strive to obtain a facility in determining the precise grammatical meaning of the words of the text, for in the end much of his success will depend upon how well he has understood the language of God's word as it was spoken to the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles long ago. With thorough instruction in Latin grammar – words, their ideas and metaphorical expressions, composition – the aspiring preacher will then seek to acquire other languages, especially Greek and Hebrew (and its relatives Aramaic and Syriac), to advance his understanding of biblical words and foster good judgment in speaking.

* * * * *

426 See book 2 CWE 68 474; see also *Ratio* 184–5. For Erasmus' insistence on establishing the historical accuracy of the text, see Hilmar M. Pabel 'Retelling the History of the Early Church: Erasmus' Paraphrase on Acts' *Church History* 69 1 (2000) 63–85, especially 69 for comments on the importance of geography.

427 See book 2 CWE 68 480. For the idea of *elegantia*, see Lausberg §460.1; it involves idiomatic correctness (*latinitas*) and clarity (*perspicuitas*), ornaments (*ornatus*) and appropriateness (*aptum*). See also Quintilian 8.1.2, 11.3.30.

428 See book 2 CWE 68 474; cf *Ratio* 185.

429 See book 2 CWE 68 476; cf Horace *Ars poetica* 46–72. Help for the problem of Hebrew names and places would come from Jerome's translation of Eusebius' *Loca hebraica* and Philo's *Nomina hebraica*, which appear in volume IV of Erasmus' 1516 edition of Jerome; see the introduction to CWE 61 xxviii; cf *Ratio* 184–5.

Erasmus' model of the aspiring preacher further demands that the candidate demonstrate a natural disposition for the office and advancement in the art of public speaking. The young man will need to listen to successful preachers whom he can imitate and with whom he can train continually.[430] Not surprisingly, Erasmus does not dismiss or denigrate the vernacular; he demands that the preacher know it well because it is principally in this tongue that he must make himself understood and draw people to Christ.[431] For this reason too it is crucial he be educated among those who excel in the vernacular language so that in 'the pulpit, where the greatest matters are discussed,' he might command 'a magnificent, appropriate, expressive, and ready supply of words (*verborum copia*).'[432] Likewise he must learn to pronounce correctly,[433] which was of paramount importance in the ancients' training of youth. Erasmus declares, according to what others have said, that the Italian, Spanish, and French vernaculars, 'however corrupted, contain a grace that Latin does not achieve,'[434] and possibly the same could be said for English and German. And he once noted in his brief sketch of John Colet's life that his study of the English authors 'who did for their own people what Dante and Petrarch did for the Italians' endowed him with 'a facility of speech ... to be a herald of the gospel message.'[435] Without attentive study of the vernacular language therefore, one lacked the linguistic dexterity to communicate with his audience and would likely produce tragic results.

Erasmus moves quickly into the matter of classical rhetoric by taking up 'the particular tasks of the orator,'often referred to as the five parts of oratory or duties of the orator (invention, arrangement, style, memory, delivery).[436] Although not immediately apparent to the reader, nor expressly stated by Erasmus, these five parts of oratory constitute something of a basic

* * * * *

430 See book 2 CWE 68 487.
431 See book 2 CWE 68 486–7.
432 See book 2 CWE 68 486–7.
433 See book 3 CWE 68 739–46. See also *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 347–475, which deals with Latin and Greek pronunciation, but whose principles, in the matter of preaching, Erasmus would certainly admit applied to vernacular speech, despite the appearance of so many new 'barbarian languages,' 'the number of different dialects even within single countries ...,' and 'their tendency to being debased' (390).
434 Book 2 CWE 68 488
435 Ep 1211:307–9
436 See book 2 CWE 68 509; and Quintilian 3.3.1–15: 'The art of oratory (*omnis autem orandi ratio*), as taught by most authorities, and those the best, consists of five parts: invention, arrangement, expression, memory, and delivery or action ...'

structure for books 2 and 3 of *Ecclesiastes*.[437] Whether one addressed civic assemblies or sacred congregations, the speaker had to devote time to invention (*inventio*), that is finding the fitting subject or conceiving the idea (*res*),[438] and imposing an effective arrangement (*dispositio* or *ordo*) upon it.[439] He would then clothe it with his own words and style (*elocutio*), memorize what needed to be retained (*memoria*), and deliver it (*actio* or *pronuntiatio*). As important as these five parts are, Erasmus gives them somewhat unequal treatment: invention, he tells us, he treated extensively in book 2, largely subsuming arrangement under it (as well as treating it under division when he considers the parts of the oration – *partes operis*);[440] *elocutio* he covers throughout book 3, where he also addresses memory and offers advice on delivery.

Affirming as paramount the duty of the bishop to teach, and in doing so move listeners by stirring emotions and awakening hearts to embrace godliness, Erasmus situates the *ecclesiastes'* work squarely within the ancients' three tasks or functions (*munera*) of the orator – teaching, moving, and delighting (*docere, movere, delectare*). All of these fall under the more general task of persuasion (*persuasio*), which most ancient writers regarded as the essence of rhetoric – the art of persuasion:[441] teaching addresses the intellect, moving engages the will, delighting appeals to the senses. In Christian preaching, however, there is of course this difference: preaching is a work of *pietas* that must drive the preacher's words. As Erasmus notes, 'The most important thing for persuasion is to love what you are urging; the heart itself supplies ardour of speech to the lover, and it brings the greatest force to effective teaching if you display within yourself whatever you are teaching to others.'[442] Similarly Augustine, following classical rhetorical teaching in his *De doctrina christiana*, defined the preacher's goal with

* * * * *

437 For an analysis of the problematic 'internal structure' of *Ecclesiastes*, see Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 169–72.

438 Quintilian 3.3.1–2; see Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 135–67.

439 Quintilian 3.3.8: arrangement, 'the marshalling of arguments in the best possible order.' Important in this respect for the thematic sermon is Erasmus' instruction on 'division'; see book 2 passim.

440 See book 2 CWE 68 509: 'Invention, which supplies the subject matter, though really it embraces both expression and order . . .'

441 See Quintilian 2.15.1–38, where the author gives many definitions of the ancients; eg Aristotle: 'Rhetoric is the power of discovering all means of persuading by speech.' Quintilian however sees it rather as 'the science of speaking well.' See Lausberg §§3–41.

442 See book 1 299.

the Ciceronian triad – 'to teach, to delight, to bend . . .' (*docere*, *delectare*, *flectere*).[443] Of the three activities, however, the most important, according to Augustine and Erasmus, is teaching, for in the latter's words, 'By teaching we cause something to be understood and made persuasive . . .'[444] Although, as Quintilian noted, 'There have been certain writers of no small authority who have held that the sole duty of the orator was to instruct,'[445] he and many others understood that teaching can be dry and unproductive if there is not present some charm or appeal that keeps one bound to the speaker's words. In a sermon one must feel moved or persuaded by the message; for if we do not desire to embrace the good, the words have not achieved their intended effect.[446] While understanding the importance of all three tasks, Erasmus maintains that teaching what needs to be known for salvation is the core of the preacher's work. Teaching the heavenly philosophy was after all the heart of Jesus' earthly ministry, but it was

* * * * *

443 The terms for this triad will vary. Usually the three components of persuasion (*persuadere*) are given as *docere, delectare, movere*. See Lausberg §§255–7. See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.27: 'Therefore a certain eloquent man [Cicero] said, and said truly, that he who is eloquent should speak in such a way that he teaches, delights, and moves. Then he added, "To teach is a necessity, to please is a sweetness, to persuade is a victory"' (trans D.W. Robertson). See Cicero *Orator* 21.69: . . . *ut probet, ut delectet, ut flectat. Probare necessitatis est, delectare suavitatis, flectere victoriae*.

444 Book 2 CWE 68 504

445 Quintilian 5. prf 1: 'In their view appeals to the emotions were to be excluded for two reasons, first on the ground that all disturbance of the mind was a fault, and secondly that it was wrong to distract the judge from the truth by exciting his pity, bringing influence to bear, and the like.' Quintilian and the others obviously have in mind speeches before law courts.

446 See also Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 177, where he discusses the effect of the grace of the word: 'This happens in three ways. First, in order to instruct the intellect, and this is the case when a man speaks so as to teach. Secondly, in order to move the affections, so that a man willingly hearkens to the word of God. This is the case when a man speaks so as to please his hearers, not indeed with a view to his own favour, but in order to draw them to listen to God's word. Thirdly, in order that men may love that which is signified by the word, and desire to fulfill it, and this is the case when a man so speaks as to sway his hearers. In order to effect this the Holy Ghost makes use of the human tongue as of an instrument; but he it is who perfects the work within. Hence Gregory says in a homily for Pentecost (*Hom. 30 in Evangelia*): "Unless the Holy Ghost fill the hearts of the hearers, in vain does the voice of the teacher resound in the ears of the body."' Aquinas is aware that Augustine refers to this rhetorical triad in the *De doctrina christiana* (4.12); see *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 177 a 1 obj 1.

also his special charisma as teacher to move and delight the hearts of his hearers.

Ecclesiastes dwells but briefly on the three tasks of oratory, most likely because the matter was well known and needed little elaboration. Numerous passages from Scripture illustrate how these tasks were executed; those who heard Christ teaching, for example, could not help but be moved and take delight in his words, as the exclamation of the disciples on the road to Emmaus demonstrates: 'Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?'[447] In *De doctrina christiana* (4.12) Augustine captures this succinctly when referring to Cicero's *Orator* (21.69): 'Of the three [tasks of the orator], that which is given first place, that is, the necessity of teaching, resides in the things which we have to say, the other two in the manner in which we say it.' Erasmus concurs with Augustine's remark that sometimes 'the matter itself is pleasing when it is revealed simply because it is true,'[448] and he praises the homilies of Origen because his teaching brought delight in the doctrine he presents.[449] *Ecclesiastes* likewise proceeds from this principle, that if one taught skilfully, the matter itself brought delight. Teaching therefore was of primary importance, but one did not on this account neglect the crucial obligations of moving (*movere, flectare*) and delighting (*delectare*). After all, the complaint Erasmus had with the scholastics was that their excessive focus on academic teaching did not take into account the emotional and spiritual needs of the congregation who had to listen to cold, lifeless words.[450]

* * * * *

447 Luke 24:32. See *Paraphrasis in Lucam 11–24* CWE 48 272: 'When he was explaining to us the puzzles of figures and prophecies from Scripture in personal conversation as we travelled, didn't we feel a kind of marvellous glowing in our heart, nothing like the feeling that the speeches of the Scribes and Pharisees regularly produce in the hearts of the hearers? But the speech of the Lord Jesus used to be just like that to those who listened to him with open minds. He pricked his hearers, moved them, carried them out of themselves, seared them, set them afire, left sparks and darts in their hearts.'

448 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.12.27

449 See eg Erasmus' words on Origen's *Homilae in Genesim* 8 in *Ratio* 188–9 about Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac; he comments: 'Haec copiosius et elegantius ab Origene disseruntur, haud scio maiorene voluptate lectoris an fructu, cum tantum interim in historico sensu versetur' (189). See also *Ratio* 296 on Origen's teaching: 'nemo plus docet quam Origenes . . .' See also his preface to *Fragmentum commentariorum Origenis in evangelium secundum Matthaeum* in Allen XI 338: 'Nusquam Origenes non ardet, sed nusquam est ardentior quam ubi Christi sermones actusque tractat.'

450 On the tension between humanists and scholastics, see Erika Rummel '*Et cum theologo bella poeta gerit:* The Conflict between Humanists and Scholastics Re-

Like Augustine, Erasmus also imagined that the preacher more often than not stood before benighted creatures who could scarcely appreciate the beauty of the celestial philosophy. The devout preacher therefore first had to move them – that is, to awaken, allure, stroke, cajole, and rebuke them. In this, as in the audience's delight that results from good preaching, the preacher would be guided by the goal that he apply everything to his hearers' benefit, 'striving in every way to render most pleasant to his audience that which is most wholesome,'[451] to persuade 'so that our hearer wants to embrace what is honourable and useful.'[452]

Though the preacher does in fact teach, move, and delight, at the general level the ancients believed the special power of eloquence lay in its ability to persuade others (*persuadere*), bending the listeners' will and emotions, turning them as it wishes, or winning over of the audience. Focusing on what is together inseparably honourable and expedient differs too from the aims of demagogues and crowd pleasers, for the preacher intends the emotional response of his hearers to be directed towards the highest end possible, namely that they understand why they should embrace the good and thereupon receive warmly the reform of life and pursuit of godliness. If the ancients focused on the benefit (*utilitas*) of public speaking, Erasmus, following Augustine, perceives an uncommon benefit since the message of the preacher deals with everlasting happiness.[453] It would therefore not be appropriate for preachers to tickle the ears of the crowd merely to please it; their task was to ensure that the crowd grew accustomed to take delight in those things of supreme importance.[454]

Since Aristotle's *Rhetoric* most classical authors held that there are three kinds of speaking (*genera dicendi*) – judicial or forensic (*genus iudiciale* or *forense*), deliberative or suasorial (*genus deliberativum* or *suasorium*), and demonstrative or encomiastic (*genus demonstrativum* or *encomiasticum*).[455] Quintilian observed that Aristotle, 'by his tripartite division of oratory into

* * * * *

visited' *Sixteenth Century Journal* 23 (1992) 713–26; and *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge, Mass 1995).

451 See book 2 CWE 68 508–9.

452 Book 2 CWE 68 500; see also Cicero *De officiis* 3.3.11: 'Expediency can never conflict with moral rectitude.'

453 See book 2 CWE 68 510; Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.18.35: 'Everything we say, especially when speaking before the people, must be referred, not to the temporal welfare of man, but to his eternal welfare and to the avoidance of eternal punishment, so that everything we say is of great importance . . .'

454 See book 3 CWE 68 850, 880–1.

455 The demonstrative genre is also often referred to as laudatory, encomiastic, or epideictic.

forensic, deliberative and demonstrative, practically brought everything into the orator's domain, since there is nothing that may not come up for treatment by one of these three kinds of rhetoric.'[456] Quintilian accepts this tripartite division, acknowledging the weighty authority of those who have held this classification of types of speaking, though he does not foreclose the possibility of other *genera* falling outside of these three. In book 3 of his *Institutio oratoria*, Quintilian takes up the question 'whether there are three kinds or more,'[457] noting somewhat impatiently and disparagingly that Cicero (*De oratore* 2.10.43–71) and someone else Quintilian refers to as 'the greatest authority of our time' (perhaps Pliny the Elder)[458] argued that 'there are not merely more than three, but that the number of kinds is almost past calculation . . .' Quintilian asks, 'If we place the task of praise and denunciation in the third division, on what kind of oratory are we to consider ourselves to be employed, when we complain, console, pacify, excite, terrify, encourage, instruct, explain obscurities, narrate, plead for mercy, thank, congratulate, reproach, abuse, describe, command, retract, express our desires and opinions not to mention no other of the many possibilities?' (Quintilian 3.4.3). 'As an adherent of the older view,' Quintilian takes 'the safest and most rational course,' reaffirming the tripartite division, 'following the authority of the majority' (Quintilian 3.4.12). His remarks however might have offered Erasmus inspiration for seeing in these three classical *genera dicendi* (judicial, deliberative, demonstrative), especially the deliberative *genus*, the specific oratorical types of Christian preaching enunciated by St Paul.

In his Second Letter to Timothy (2 Tim 3:16–17) Paul writes that 'all Scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every good work';[459] and he urges Timothy to 'preach the word: be urgent

* * * * *

456 Quintilian 2.21.23. These three *genera* are sometimes referred to as the art of accusing and defending (*ars accusandi et defendendi*), the art of persuading and dissuading (*ars persuadendi et dissuadendi*), and the art of praise and blame (*ars laudandi et vituperandi*); see O'Malley *Praise and Blame* Chapter Two: 'The New Rhetoric: Ars laudandi et vituperandi' 36–76.

457 Quintilian 3.4.1

458 Some commentators on Quintilian suggest Pliny the Elder (23/24–79), who according to Pliny the Younger (a student of Quintilian), wrote works on oratory; see Quintilian 3.1.21, 3.3.2, and OCD 845–6. Cf Cicero's remark to the jurors in *Pro Archia* 8.18.21–3: 'Quotiens ego hunc Archiam vidi, iudices – utar enim vestra benignitate, quoniam me in hoc novo genere dicendi tam diligenter attenditis . . .'

459 Erasmus quotes and alludes to these passages from Paul throughout *Ecclesiastes*.

in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching' (2 Tim 4:2).[460] To these duties Paul elsewhere adds consolation: 'He who prophesies speaks to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation' (1 Cor 14:3, cf 14:5).[461] In line with Quintilian's position that 'all other species [of oratory] fall under these three *genera* . . .,' Erasmus inventively situates the Pauline activities of the preacher chiefly within the classical *genus suasorium* (or *deliberativum*); at the same time he tells readers that many instructions for the judicial type also apply to the suasorial or deliberative,[462] as it is in this *genus* that 'the preacher is especially occupied' – 'with teaching, with persuading, with exhorting, advising, and admonishing.'[463] Citations and echoes of these Pauline passages defining the work of the preacher abound throughout *Ecclesiastes*; in Erasmus' view these activities constitute the essence of the preacher's work. Though in explaining these Pauline duties Erasmus gives most attention to teaching, he also offers methods of exhorting, reproving, correcting, entreating, consoling, and instructing in justice, with illustrations from the prophets of the Old Testament, Christ and Peter, and the Fathers of the church.[464] Scriptural preaching for Erasmus then chiefly follows the prescriptions of the classical *genus suasorium* (*deliberativum*). In the concrete context of the bishop's duties, the rhetorical prescriptions for this, as well as for the other two *genera*, find particular application.

* * * * *

460 RSV; see also 1 Cor 14:31; cf *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 20–1.

461 RSV

462 See book 2 CWE 68 585 where Erasmus sees some use for the judicial type: 'It is rare for a preacher to be occupied with the judicial type, but yet it is not much different from this sort when he speaks from his pulpit against Jews, heretics, schismatics, or even pagans.'

463 See book 2 CWE 68 500; later in book 2 CWE 68 545 Erasmus includes the encomiastic type: 'concerning the suasorial and encomiastic type, since the preacher is especially occupied with these . . .' Cf 2 Tim 3:16–17, 4:2. Cf *Ratio* 280, 301. See also book 2 CWE 68 567: 'That leaves exhortation, which is a part of the suasorial type rather than a different one, except that someone who is persuading is teaching through arguments, someone who is exhorting is stimulating through emotions.'

464 Erasmus mentioned these duties of the preacher in passing in *Ratio* 280. Forty years after *Ecclesiastes'* publication the Spanish Franciscan Diego de Estella in his *Modo de predicar* (Salamanca: Joannes Baptista à Terranova 1576) moves decidedly beyond Erasmus' inspiration, bypassing the classical authorities altogether, and declaring that St Paul provided preachers with specifically Christian *genera*. Although Estella never acknowledges his sources, Erasmus' *Ecclesiastes* seems to have had a significant influence on his work.

Erasmus focuses attention mostly on the *genus suasorium* but shows how useful the other two *genera dicendi* can be to the preacher. Even though 'the forensic type (*genus iudiciale*) is far removed from the duty of the preacher'[465] because his work is quite different from that of a courtroom advocate, nonetheless 'many instructions imparted in this type are useful,' such as 'an argument has a main point' (*status*)[466] whose purpose is to give focus to the speech and make it 'internally consistent.' It is useful, for example, for the preacher whose work is 'especially occupied' in the suasorial and encomiastic genres to understand the idea and types of *status* (conjectural or negatory, characteristic, definitional) so he can focus every part of his sermon 'as though towards a target and not stray from the subject in pointless digressions . . .'[467] In fact, 'everyone who speaks to the people in order to persuade, exhort, or console sets before himself some definite goal that he wishes to accomplish; at any rate it stands in the place of the status.'[468] Erasmus maintains that considerations of status emerge frequently in the themes of sermons as well as in private conversations, and thus can apply to all the activities defined by St Paul.

Using the ancients' teachings on public oratory, however, requires one to make crucial distinctions between speaking to deliberative assemblies like those of the Athenians and the Romans and preaching to an assembly of Christians.[469] In preaching, Erasmus notes, no real deliberation occurs because such takes place only when an issue is in doubt or one urges a more probable course of action whose outcome is not assured. In matters of faith and morality, on the other hand, there is no doubt, as they have been made abundantly clear in Scripture. Christians know what they must do,

* * * * *

465 Book 2 CWE 68 497

466 *status*: *quaestio*, *constitutio*, *caput*, *στάσις* 'status.' See Lausberg §§79–138, 149–97. Status means the issue in question, the basic issue; for 'a simple cause' it is 'that point which the orator sees to be the most important for him to make and on which the judge sees that he must fix all his attention. For it is on this that the cause will stand or fall' (Quintilian 3.6.9); yet questions may have 'more *bases* than one.' Cf Quintilian 3.6.1–104; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.11.15–1.17.27; Cicero *Orator* 14.45. Each *genus* of oratory will have a status proper to it. See below where Erasmus defines the term: 'A status is the essential point of a case or question, to which the speaker refers everything and which the listener has particularly in view' (book 2 CWE 68 581).

467 Book 2 CWE 68 582

468 Book 2 CWE 68 582

469 Erasmus does however make clear that the preacher, though always urging only what is honourable, nonetheless often has an audience of persons of varying degrees of virtue; see eg books 2 and 3 CWE 68 714 and 1002.

and the preacher's task is to urge them 'to pursue more keenly what everyone agrees should be pursued . . .'[470] As Paul puts it, the preacher 'entreats' (2 Tim 4:1–2) or 'urges' or 'exhorts' all to perform what they know is right. Again, all this fits with Erasmus' understanding of God's revelation in his law and *logos*, Christ, for in nature and in Jesus' teaching the matter of the divine mind has been made known to us with brilliant clarity. It is not for Christians to deliberate the merits of following God's law but to embrace what God inscribed in our hearts and in nature and fully revealed to us in his Son. To that end the preacher's *paraenesis* urges listeners to overcome all fleshly resistance and willingly embrace godliness.

Erasmus' accommodation of the deliberative *genus* to preaching presents the matter somewhat minimally. Surprisingly, it does not consider those situations when persuasion to a course of action is not simply a question of sin versus virtue but of which course of action is more honourable according to circumstances. Such questions are particularly pertinent to Christian morality, but his treatise's purpose is not to offer advice on complex pastoral principles of ethical decision making, rather to offer effective methods for preaching to an audience comprised of all manner of Christians, most of whom in Erasmus' view are grossly steeped in sin. Erasmus recognized that the types of assemblies Cicero and Quintilian had in mind for deliberative oratory no longer existed, but the ancients' teachings on the *genus suasorium*, mutatis mutandis, nonetheless offered the preacher extensive help with sacred *conciones*.[471]

Similarly, with the *genus demonstrativum* (demonstrative or encomiastic) Erasmus distinguishes the aim of the preacher from the pagan panegyrist, because Christian encomia should urge listeners to imitate, not simply admire, the object of their praises. Contrary to pagan practices, Erasmus advises that 'God's majesty must frequently be exalted,'[472] and he tightly restricts this *genus* to extolling the praises of God, the Blessed Mother, the saints, and angels. Preachers should use this genre for 'doxology and thanksgiving, partly in praise of the devout, especially of the martyrs who have glorified God by their death';[473] however, he urges caution on what is to be said about the saints, to avoid rashly adding

* * * * *

470 Book 2 CWE 68 546

471 See book 2 CWE 68 545–52.

472 Book 2 CWE 68 553

473 Book 2 CWE 68 501; see also book 2 CWE 68 553: 'The encomiastic type is generally occupied in extolling the praises of God or of the saints, since funeral orations are not so much in use among ecclesiastics now as they once were.'

miracles[474] and various types of nonsense. Christian panegyrics, like the pagan panegyrics, should present something for us to admire, but go well beyond them by 'making admiration for them [the saints] sweep us into zeal for emulation.'[475] In fact, everything said about a saint should be put in such a way that 'God is thanked at the same time and the congregation is challenged to his example.'[476] Encomia ought to inflame people towards the love of godliness by putting before their eyes God's power in his saints that we might praise God by imitating the virtues of those holy men and women who themselves imitated Christ, each in his or her own unique way.[477] Erasmus notes that preachers may also use this genre for praising institutions such as marriage and monastic life,[478] though in doing so they should 'hunt out from everywhere what is conducive to living well, namely that we should revere the supremely powerful, above all that we should love the supremely good.'[479]

Although occasions abound for using the encomiastic genre Erasmus emphasizes that the particular purpose of the encomiastic genre is for frequently exalting the majesty of God,[480] which is to be done not merely for its own sake but for the greater purpose of urging others to godliness. In fact he provides readers with a brief outline of the parts of an encomiastic sermon (*laudatorium*) whose goal is to expound 'the generosity of the divinity towards the human race,'[481] which should engender thanksgiving in listeners and the desire to imitate Christ; for as Christ so loved us, so must we in gratitude turn to our neighbours in love. The sermon should then invite us to consider God's 'great power, wisdom, and goodness,' which 'shines in everything created, so that wherever we turn our eyes or mind we celebrate the craftsman in everything'; and it will tell 'how wondrously God has worked in holy men.' The entire oration thus begins and ends with a consideration of God's power and moves us not only to admiration but to imitation and the love of God in giving ourselves to others. In its function the encomiastic sermon replicates Erasmus' teaching on godliness in urging

* * * * *

474 Book 2 CWE 68 566
475 Book 3 CWE 68 798. See *Peregrinatio religionis ergo* in *Colloquia* CWE 40 624–5, 653–4 n25.
476 Book 2 CWE 68 566
477 Book 2 CWE 68 560
478 Book 2 CWE 68 588, 592. Erasmus of course praises monastic life where it is lived authentically, as it seemed to Erasmus was the case when St Jerome 'chose the monastic life'; see *Vita Hieronymi* CWE 61 29.
479 Book 2 CWE 68 554
480 Book 2 CWE 68 553
481 Book 2 CWE 68 554

the Christian always to be mindful of God's majesty and beneficence, because only with this interior disposition can one's heart open in justice with the will to reciprocate God's infinite love and mercy. It is therefore (characteristically Erasmian) to amplify and embellish the grandeur of God, as this device can awaken shame in the spiritually slothful who have received such benefits and are niggardly and ignoble in thanking the greatest giver. Erasmus observes that this method is also especially effective when the preacher deters from sin, 'so that it seems a more detestable crime to scorn him [God] by sinning or to prefer any created thing to him, whose greatness is such that there is nothing anywhere in heaven or in earth that can be compared to him . . .'[482] The techniques of the encomiastic method thus focus on bringing listeners to the psychological awareness of their absolute finite contingency in the presence of the infinite supreme good; for this 'it is appropriate to stress the majesty that infinitely surpasses not only the eloquence but the understanding of all men.'[483] Having such emotions stirred, the heart is then moved to sorrow and love and can respond fittingly.

In principle Erasmus does not disallow the practice of publicly praising the saints, but he makes cautionary recommendations about it. The saints are secondary in the hierarchy of those to whom praises should be given; God the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit should be the ultimate term of all our praises. If one looks for a person who was perfectly praiseworthy in every way, a model for our lives, one finds it in Christ who alone should command our continuous praises; 'Christ is abundantly fertile . . . a preacher could not lack a theme for speaking even if he wanted to preach four times every day . . .'[484] So Erasmus advises those who preach on the saints that they dedicate the greatest part of the sermon to the Gospel and the Epistle and propose them for imitation rather than for praise.[485] Echoing the psalmist (Ps 113:9 [Vulg]), he reasons that praise should go to God alone whose power was alive in the saints, and that we should imitate the saints in so far as they were imitators of Christ.[486] For what we admire in these holy men and

* * * * *

482 Book 2 CWE 68 553

483 Book 2 CWE 68 553

484 Book 2 CWE 68 565; see also Ep 1211:105–6 for Erasmus' words on Jean Vitrier, who fits this perfectly: 'Sometimes he preached seven times in a single day, nor was he ever short of matter for a well-studied sermon, when Christ was his subject.'

485 See book 2 CWE 68 565.

486 Cf Ps 115:1 (Vulg 113:9–10): 'Not to us, O Lord, not to us; but to thy name give glory.' See also *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 203: 'Because all glory belongs to him, but especially ought we to praise him [Christ] by the

women is not the specific peculiarities or practices of their lives like the types of austerities, clothing, or methods of prayer that matter, but their dedication to follow Christ, which is what each one must do in his or her own way.[487] Though we may praise these saints, we should at the same time recall our purpose is to imitate them as they imitated Christ. Imitating the saints therefore means the imitation of Christ who 'alone was the perfect model ... of all the virtues.'[488]

Erasmus calls attention to some notable church Fathers who took from the ancient orators techniques for praising the lives and deeds of great men and applied them to praising living men and women imitating Christ. He finds examples of these encomia in Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, and John Chrysostom;[489] but he cautions readers about this and only with great reservation allows encomia of famous men and praise of the living, a practice which he notes crept into the early church: 'I think that our preachers should be rather sparing in their imitation of an example which the bishops of old derived from a public custom of the heathen ...'[490] To be avoided, of course, is all manner of praising the living, especially in 'fawning orations that ambassadors or orators use before the mighty in epithalamia' and other speeches.[491] Erasmus sharply criticizes

* * * * *

triple name ...' (203); and *Enchiridion* CWE 66 71: 'No devotion is more acceptable and proper to the saints than striving to imitate their virtues.' Cf *Ratio* 232–3.

487 See book 2 CWE 68 504 and book 4 CWE 68 1039: 'in uno Christo virtutum omnium absolutum exemplar ostensum est, in quo nihil vitii aut defectus fuit admixtum'; and *Enchiridion* CWE 66 86: 'Our example is Christ, in whom alone are all the patterns of the holy life. You may imitate him without any exception. From men of tried virtue you may take single qualities as a model according as they correspond to the archetype of Christ.' Similarly Erasmus does not advocate the imitation of the church Fathers themselves but rather their rhetorical, literary excellence in preaching and writing about the philosophy of Christ. See eg Ralph Keen 'The Allure of the Past: Religious Reform and the Recovery of Ancient Ideals,' ERSY 26 (2006) 16–28, especially 21–2.

488 Book 4 CWE 68 1039

489 See eg *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose* trans Leo P. McCauley et al FOC 22 (Washington, DC 1968).

490 Book 2 CWE 68 503–4

491 Book 2 CWE 68 560. Erasmus might have in mind the panegyric he gave for Archduke Philip of Austria (6 January 1504); see CWE 27 1–75. He concedes, 'It happens that some living man has to be praised'; if so, then 'we will shape our praise in such a way that we speak of the gifts of God in him rather than of the man himself.'

the preaching before the popes, lamenting that 'today, for shame, we have reached such a point of impudence that both the priest in the mass (*in ipso sacro*) itself and the preacher frequently flatter popes and princes abjectly in public assembly (*in concione publica*) . . .'[492] His personal experience in 1509 at a sermon preached before the pope (*coram papa inter missarum solemnia*) may have provoked this criticism, however unjust it might have been.[493]

After treating more generally the *genus deliberativum* (*suasorium*) and *demonstrativum* (*laudatorium*) in book 2, Erasmus turns to the specific tasks of the preacher as stated by Paul in his Second Letter to Timothy (2 Tim 3:16–17 and 4:2), promising to 'add in passing what seems particular to exhortation, consolation, or rebuke.'[494] In exhortation, which comes under the *genus suasorium*, he observes that those who persuade do so by teaching with arguments, but those who exhort do so 'by stimulating through the emotions.'[495] Paul's special skill in employing the *genus suasorium* elicits Erasmus' admiration: for Paul often beseeches, exhorts, and implores his communities ('I beseech you to walk worthily . . .'), which serves important functions, especially for supporting those needing encouragement to embrace godliness or to open their arms in love to their neighbours. Exhortation is most appropriate when, after urging listeners to acquire virtues and eradicate vices, the preacher can hold out the promise of rewards. For this the preacher must use psychology, as Christ did in promising Peter a hundredfold in this life and everlasting life in the world-to-come' (Mark 10:28–30). Rewards too can be understood diversely, for they can be promised for just merits in this life; and for a life of Christian godliness the preacher can promise the reward of eternal glory.[496] Like Paul, the preacher must therefore always be mindful of his listeners' human nature, which expects rewards for difficult undertakings.

* * * * *

492 Book 2 CWE 68 560

493 For Erasmus' attendance at the Good Friday sermon (likely delivered by Tommaso 'Fedra' Inghirami), see *Ciceronianus* CWE 28 384–7 and 562 n306 (Erasmus calls him Pietro Fedra). For a closer look at (and a positive evaluation of) Renaissance humanist preachers in Rome at the papal court in this time, see O'Malley *Praise and Blame* 29–31; see also Halkin 69–70.

494 Book 2 CWE 68 546; cf 2 Tim 3:16; see also *Lingua* CWE 29 410–11.

495 Book 2 CWE 68 567

496 Book 2 CWE 68 569. As we note below in regard to the Franciscan practice of preaching, Erasmus sometimes uses the term 'glory' for one's heavenly reward: 'Glory could be subsumed under the heading of reward . . .' See book 2 CWE 68 569 and n525.

To the preacher's activities also falls the Pauline injunction to console, the *consolatorium*, which on occasion is given a prominent place in the Christian assembly.[497] Citing Paul that 'he who prophesies speaks to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation' (1 Cor 14:3),[498] Erasmus adds that one who consoles others needs to be well provided with specific topics and a method to address listeners at moments of public and private grief.[499] Again, unlike the pagan audiences that never knew Christ, Christians enjoy the benefit of a preacher who can speak of our temporal losses *sub specie aeternitatis*. Yet, far from discounting pagan writings, Erasmus maintains that the ancients' topics of the *genus consolatorium* will often be most appropriate when translated into a Christian context. Because God is the all-powerful source of good, the preacher will make clear to those who mourn 'that none of this is happening by chance but is sent divinely to purge us, or to call us back to a more moral life, or to exercise our patience and enhance our crown, so that in all of this we should thank God . . .'[500] It is the preacher's role, therefore, to place our sufferings within a wide Christian framework that allows listeners to see their losses in the light of God's providence and gain hope that he will reward them for their patience and acceptance of his will.

Finally, the preacher must 'rebuke' or 'reprove' his congregation, as Paul does with the Corinthians and Galatians, and as Jesus did with the scribes, Pharisees, and even with his own disciples. This activity, the *epitimêtikon* ('censorious' or 'critical') or *nouthetikos* ('monitory'),[501] however, requires discretion, for 'it suits the gentleness of the gospel that the preacher should admonish rather than rebuke, though sometimes the enormity of the crimes demands that a preacher do what Isaiah commands him to do: "Shout, do not cease, like a trumpet raise your voice and announce their crimes to the people and their sins to the house of Jacob"' (Isa 58:1).[502] It is of course a principal task of the preacher never to neglect the weighty

* * * * *

497 See book 2 CWE 68 571. For a broader picture of consolation in Christian tradition, see George W. McClure *Sorrow and Consolation in Italian Humanism* (Princeton 1991), especially 'Introduction: The Classical and Christian Traditions' 3–17. McClure notes that 'Paul largely proscribes the experience of sorrow as unbefitting the Christian,' but 'nonetheless, a tradition of Christian consolation does emerge, beginning with Paul's Epistles' (10–11).

498 RSV

499 Book 2 CWE 68 571–4

500 Book 2 CWE 68 573

501 See book 2 CWE 68 574–80.

502 Book 2 CWE 68 574; cf *Enchiridion* CWE 66 80.

obligation of calling the morally degenerate from their vices, for the preacher himself will be held accountable to God for those he failed to admonish of their sins and wickedness. Still, a prudential care is required when rebuking others. It is insufficient simply to rail against vices, as this often becomes counterproductive and can make a preacher look foolish. When rebuking, the preacher should also offer hearers salutary teaching and clear direction for the amendment of their lives, persuading them that 'the path of virtue all the way to perfection' is 'much more right and even pleasant' than the alternative.[503] Often, too, it is necessary to mitigate one's rebuke in order not to condemn the entire person or his work, but to praise what is good while singling out the specific errors that require charitable correction.[504] As in his treatment of the *genera*, Erasmus offers advice on employing discretion when speaking before a congregation, which might include souls who require sharp rebuke and others who have already set their hearts on friendship with Christ. Erasmus' many caveats further direct the preacher away from the abuses commonly committed by those who 'babble out before the congregation all the hideous crimes they have learnt in secret confessions'[505] or criticize certain crimes that are best left unspoken, especially those of a sexual nature – 'the bizarre forms of pleasure ... and countless other forms of abominable filth ...'; 'there is no need to depict them as though the intention were to teach them rather than to execrate them.'[506] Erasmus offers much practical advice for correction, all the while urging discretion, because 'very often a sober and moderate admonition accomplishes more than a furious outcry.'[507] Failing to observe decorum, especially in rebuke, can lead to faults far in excess of the moral lapses one seeks to correct.[508]

In explaining the *genera dicendi*, Erasmus also encourages freedom in mixing them in a single *concio*, as Quintilian allowed, 'for all three kinds (*genera*) rely on the mutual assistance of the other';[509] so in a single oration accusation, deliberation, and praise might occur as well, as seen in some speeches of the ancients. Erasmus further encourages preachers, whenever appropriate, to use more than one of the specific Pauline activities within

* * * * *

503 Book 2 CWE 68 575
504 See book 3 CWE 68 802, 886, 1015–17.
505 Cf *Moria* CWE 27 132; see also *Exomologesis* 39–40.
506 Book 2 CWE 68 575–6
507 Book 2 CWE 68 578
508 See book 3 CWE 68 574–80.
509 Quintilian 3.4.16

a single *concio*, assuring them that they need not feel constrained by the prescriptions of just one *genus*; it is appropriate to mix *genera* in so far as they contribute to the overall goal of the oration, which is the spiritual benefit to the congregation. With lengthy examples of preaching from Christ's teaching, Paul's letters, the prophets, the Acts of the Apostles,[510] and his own inventions, Erasmus lays out useful ways to teach, rebuke, exhort, and console that should both edify a congregation and win credibility for the preacher.

After instruction on the *genera dicendi* Erasmus moves on to the parts of an oration (*partes orationis* or *partes operis*),[511] which number will depend on the type of speech and the concrete circumstances. Those parts analyzed by the ancients and seen as most relevant to a sacred *concio* Erasmus identifies as exordium, narration (statement of facts), division (partition), confirmation (proofs), refutation, and conclusion (peroration).[512] He accepts Quintilian and others' teaching on them and demonstrates how these can be accommodated to sermons, sometimes by omitting one or more of the parts, as the ancients took the liberty of doing as well.[513] *Ecclesiastes* does not specifically recommend eliminating any of these parts, but it allows that one may modify them or omit one or more depending on circumstances; on the whole Erasmus affirms their usefulness for preaching, pointing out too how the Scriptures and the sermons of the Fathers employ them.[514]

It is important finally to emphasize that Erasmus' instructions on preaching do not reject the 'thematic sermon,' which developed more fully after 1200 and is regarded as emblematic of the sermon literature of the Middle Ages, but he urges that it be made more simple and that one not be enslaved to the rigid sermonic complexities in evidence among preachers of his day. Erasmus, in fact, fully embraces the thematic sermon and

* * * * *

510 For Erasmus' treatment of speeches in Acts, see Pabel 'Retelling the History of the Early Church' 63–85.

511 See book 2 CWE 68 509. For 'parts of the oration' see: Cicero *De partitione oratoria*; Quintilian 4–6; *Ad Herennium* 1.3.5–17, 1.27, and 2. Here Erasmus begins to instruct his readers on applying these traditional 'parts of oratory' to preaching; he begins with the exordium. For this see especially Quintilian 4.1.1; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.4; Cicero *De inventione* 1.20.

512 See book 2 CWE 68 passim.

513 See book 2 CWE 68 510. The classic example of omitting or rearranging an important part of an oration is Cicero's *In Verrem*, where he foregoes his long opening consecutive speech in the *actio prima*, breaking it up instead into a number of short ones, each dealing with a specific charge.

514 See book 3 CWE 68 510–37.

gives advice on how to handle a theme correctly, that is, on how exordia and the other parts should be presented:[515] 'The practice by which men of more recent times begin a sermon from some line or other of Scripture (they call it a theme) is not inappropriate provided it is of such a sort as to embrace the whole of the theme because it has been taken from the very passage that he is interpreting.'[516] Erasmus observes that beginning a sermon this way is not without many examples among the Fathers. Basil, for example, when preparing to exhort a congregation to placate an angry God, follows the prophet Amos (3:8) by beginning, 'The lion has roared, and who will not fear? God has spoken, and who will not prophesy?'[517] Even the pagans delivered orations using similar conventions. But Erasmus concedes that since ancient times the practice of arranging sermons has changed: 'Some more modern authorities ... have devised other forms of order ... Some pray silently first, then stand straight and make the sign of the cross ... they then announce what they call the "theme," on which they make some general prefatory remarks ...'[518] Some preachers, after these preliminaries, repeat the theme, offer a division (a statement by the preacher of the principal points he plans to cover), and then begin the sermon proper. Significantly, Erasmus concedes validity to these changes in preaching practices: 'This does not merit disapproval so long as what they say inspires the listener with good will or attentiveness or willingness to learn.'[519] Erasmus also addresses the merits and faults of preachers who adopt the practice of appending an invocation to the deity when beginning or concluding their exordium, and he gives abundant guidance on ways to begin a sermon, emphasizing that a sermon's structure should allow for flexibility.

Though giving substantial instruction on exordia, Erasmus provides relatively little explicit help with narration (*narratio*), although he claims he

* * * * *

515 Erasmus treats the exordium in book 2 CWE 68 510–37. On Erasmus' continuities with the authors of the medieval *artes praedicandi*, see Kilcoyne and Jennings. For the thematic sermon in the Middle Ages, see especially: Th.-M Charland *Artes Praedicandi. Contribution à l'histoire de la rhétorique au Moyen Age* (Paris 1936); Gilson 'Michel Menot'; and Martin *Le métier de prédicateur* 236–51; Caplan; Murphy *Rhetoric* 215, 315, 320.

516 Book 2 CWE 68 511. For the theme in the medieval *artes praedicandi*, see Murphy *Rhetoric* 307–8.

517 Book 2 CWE 68 514; Basil *Homilia dicta tempore famis et siccitatis* PG 31 (1857) 303–28

518 Book 3 CWE 68 730–1

519 See book 3 CWE 68 731.

has given sufficient advice on the matter earlier in the treatise.[520] He does however make numerous comments and gives examples that illustrate narration, often echoing Quintilian's lengthy treatment of it.[521] Still, one might have expected Erasmus would have more to say on this topic since it lies at the heart of the preacher's work and is for Quintilian among 'the first subjects in which the rhetorician should give instruction.'[522] Erasmus does however take up 'partition' (*partitio*) with considerable attention,[523] analyzing its two aspects: first, the partition generally follows from the exordium and is the preacher's way of letting the audience know succinctly in advance the basic points of the sermon he plans to cover; second, 'it also sets forth the topics to be discussed, their precise number and sequence.'[524] Under this second aspect he also treats arrangement (*dispositio* or *ordo*), to which he will devote further, albeit cursory, treatment in book 3. In explaining the idea of partition, he lays down ways a sermon can best be structured to facilitate both the preacher's recollection as he delivers it and his audience's retention of it. But Erasmus cautions that partitions have their drawbacks; for example, important items often come spontaneously to mind, which do not fit the scheme promised; and he warns against emulating the scholastics in their excessive divisions and subdivisions of the matter to be propounded, which can cause annoyance.[525] Erasmus does not tell us much about how his own contemporaries partition their sermons; he refers them instead to the best of preachers – John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil, and especially Jesus and Paul – and provides examples of his own based largely on passages from Scripture. In general, he advises the preacher not to become obsessed with a sermon's partition but to divide it so it is 'clear and

* * * * *

520 See book 2 CWE 68 537 where Erasmus treats *narratio* in connection with the exordium; see Chomarat ASD V-4 305 363n; and Kleinhans 54.

521 See Quintilian 4.2.1–132 and 6.3.12, 14, 39.

522 Quintilian 2.4.1

523 Book 2 CWE 68 537

524 Book 2 CWE 68 537. For a clear example of this see Cicero *Pro Quinctio* 10.36, where first he announces briefly the three points he will prove and then succinctly repeats them; see also Cicero *Pro Murena* 5.11, cited by Quintilian 4.5.12; see book 2 CWE 68 545 n402.

525 See book 3 CWE 68 538–45. See also Erasmus' comment on Jean Vitrier's method of constructing sermons: 'As a rule he did not divide his sermons under heads as the common run of preachers do, as if it were not permitted to do anything else; which is often the source of very tedious subdivisions, though all that painstaking organization takes the warmth out of an address, and because it sounds artificial, it makes the speaker carry less conviction . . .' Ep 1211:60–5. For the scholastics' excessive divisions, see *Ratio* 191.

brief' to allow hearers to retain the matter as well as possible.[526] Erasmus will return later to the principles of partition in book 2 when he takes up 'the discovery of parts or propositions.'[527]

Before delving into the discovery of propositions for winning the preacher credibility with his audience, Erasmus recalls Aristotle's observation that three things are crucial to credibility – 'practical wisdom, virtue, and good will'[528] – without all of which the preacher's words can become dangerous and deceptive. The discovery of propositions takes Erasmus into 'argumentation or proofs,' which 'induce belief in something doubtful.'[529] Here the skill or practical wisdom of the preacher is foremost, as the discovery of arguments rests partly on his native talent and partly on training.[530] Each invented proposition requires sufficient proofs to command the assent of one's audience. For authority on this Erasmus relies especially on the ancient rhetoricians, who divide proofs into two types of loci, nontechnical and technical,[531] and argue that every proof is taken either from the circumstances of persons or matters at hand. Under the nontechnical loci he lists precedents, rumours, the results of tortures, documentary evidence, oaths, and testimonies; along with these he lists signs, which are akin to them.[532] Among the technical he lists the accidental qualities of persons (family, nationality, country, sex, age, education, physical condition, fortune, etc), and those from the accidental qualities of the matter itself (cause, matter and form, the final end of an object of ultimate intention, place, time, ability, instrument, manner, etc). With abundant examples from Scripture, the ancients' writings, and human life, he demonstrates how these loci can be used by preachers in the various Pauline genres (teaching, encouraging, admonishing, rebuking, consoling etc)[533] that fall within deliberative and demonstrative oratory.

Erasmus maintains that some propositions 'are so obvious that they require no proof . . . such as that God is to be loved and worshipped above all things.'[534] On the other hand, sometimes the matter does not require proof

* * * * *

526 Book 2 CWE 68 543
527 Book 2 CWE 68 585
528 Book 2 CWE 68 599
529 See book 2 CWE 68 599.
530 See book 2 CWE 68 600–15.
531 See book 2 CWE 68 645 and passim. For the idea of loci in *Ratio* and *Ecclesiastes*, see Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 151–6.
532 See book 2 CWE 68 607–9.
533 See 2 Tim 3:16.
534 Book 2 CWE 68 609

(for example, the social value of eradicating the vice of drunkenness) but can be treated by rhetorical amplification making people aware of 'the train of ills it brings with it.'[535] Asseveration and other devices too can similarly produce powerful rhetorical effects, and an adept use of them can help to confirm an argument; but one should be mindful that most arguments require sufficient, substantial, credible proof and cannot simply be stated as obvious, only to leave the audience in doubt. To create rhetorical proofs and arguments it helps if future preachers be 'trained in dialectic from childhood,'[536] most of all in the *Topics* and *Rhetoric* of Aristotle, and less so in those books constituting his *Organon*, which 'are more suitable for judging or for arguing in the schools than for preaching.'[537] The sensible study of dialectic enhances a preacher's natural capacity for 'making correct judgments about truth and falsehood' and for teaching.[538] A fast track to the discovery of arguments lies in the places (loci) where arguments can be sought,[539] and to sharpen one's ability for this, Erasmus urges readers to be as broadly read as possible in the ancient authors, especially the comic poets, historians, and philosophers who evince a profound understanding of the complexities of human nature and the vagaries of human affairs. Moving then to 'the common sources of arguments' or topics (Latin *loci*; Greek *τόποι*) Erasmus explains the four meanings of the term *locus*:[540] 1) 'commonplaces [*loci communes*]' because they are handled by either side; 2) maxims (*sententiae*); 3) the foundation of arguments, which are used in all three *genera* of speaking (for example, in the suasorial *genus* 'the honourable, the useful, the pleasant, the easy, the necessary';[541] in epideictic 'family, homeland, physical attributes, and mental attitudes'; in the judicial especially the negatory); and 4) 'the general *loci*, which show what as a whole are the accidental properties of each thing and how arguments both necessary and plausible are drawn from each.'[542] Erasmus dedicates his extended discussion of loci to the fourth meaning, which are employed by both orators and dialecticians, and recommends, in addition to Quintilian, the *Topics* of Aristotle for its precision, though he admits the work gets bogged down in minute

* * * * *

535 Book 2 CWE 68 610; for amplification, see Lausberg §§400–9.
536 Book 2 CWE 68 611
537 Book 2 CWE 68 612; for loci see Grünwald 112–31.
538 Book 2 CWE 68 613
539 See book 2 CWE 68 614–15.
540 Book 2 CWE 68 645–7
541 Book 2 CWE 68 646
542 Book 2 CWE 68 646

details. Important for the orator is to understand 'the general division of all questions,'[543] as well as definition, genus and species, difference and property, division and partition, comparison (*similitudo*), examples and analogies, comparison from an equal, a lesser, or a greater, opposites (*dissimilia* or *differentia*), efficient causes and effects, etc. After a thorough explanation and many examples of these loci at work in argumentations, Erasmus recommends that the 'preacher in general be advised to accommodate these loci to a broader use than do the dialecticians, whose examples are generally quite pedantic.'[544] With numerous illustrations Erasmus demonstrates the singular usefulness of these loci 'for digging out the wealth that Scripture contains hidden within it and that must be put before the eyes of the uninstructed congregation.'[545] 'With these methods the preacher can adapt the subtlety of dialectic to the capacity of the congregation and elevate to a loftier meaning whatever seems too humble.'[546]

After declaring he has treated invention 'with absolute thoroughness'[547] and said enough about expression (*elocutio*),[548] Erasmus begins book 3 by returning to 'arrangement or order,'[549] this time focusing on the four ways it is understood (to bring about clarity, a suitable arrangement of the principal propositions of a speech, organizing individual argumentations, and the general order of the whole speech). Finishing this up with observations on inept preaching practices, he moves on to memory (*memoria*), but treats it briefly as well, stating that he has given sufficient advice on the topic. The reader might have wished for more on this too, but Erasmus'

* * * * *

543 Book 2 CWE 68 647: ie 'whether it is, what it is, what sort it is.' See Quintilian 3.6.80: 'We must therefore accept the view of the authorities followed by Cicero, to the effect that there are three things on which enquiry is made in every case: we ask *whether a thing is, what it is*, and *of what kind it is*.'

544 Book 2 CWE 68 693 and 694 where he differentiates the preacher's use of definition from that of the dialectician: 'The dialectician adduces but one idea: the defined is predicated of the same thing of which the definition is predicated, and vice versa; but the preacher will find numerous ideas around each locus.'

545 Book 2 CWE 68 704

546 Book 2 CWE 68 714

547 Book 3 CWE 68 725; cf Quintilian 7.1. On Erasmus' disjointed presentation of the elements of oratorical rhetoric, see Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 169–72.

548 Book 2 CWE 68 509. Erasmus understands invention as also embracing elocution and arrangement: 'Invention, which supplies the subject matter, though really it embraces both expression and order: it is in a speech what bones are in an animal's body, that which must be firm to keep all the rest from collapsing.'

549 On arrangement (*dispositio, ordo*), see Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 142–8.

scattered comments elsewhere allow readers some sense of the role memory played in contemporary sermons.

Erasmus declares that the art of memory (*ars memoriae*) can often be more of an impediment than a help. Being overanxious about memorizing one's text 'blunts creativity and chills the ardour of speech, then chills the native power of memory.'[550] He points out that 'it is safer for those who mistrust their memory to propose only the gist of their theme, or at least to have the headings of their sermon to hand, written out on paper,' which seems to have been Augustine's method.[551] His comments suggest that contemporary preachers commonly did not commit the whole sermon to memory but only the principal outline, if even that, before its delivery; and from this the preacher, ideally, spoke forth from the heart what he had meditated upon beforehand.[552] When the time came to deliver the sermon (after prayer and meditation), experienced preachers like Jean Vitrier would ascend the pulpit and deliver it with spontaneity.[553] Consequently it was crucial that the preacher stepping into the pulpit have 'a magnificent, appropriate, expressive, and ready supply of words,' for 'if this is not at hand and in readiness, so to speak, as a result of much practice, the preacher is often at a loss.'[554] It was this quality of speaking from the heart – the ardour of speech – after diligent preparation that carried the preacher's words to the hearts of his hearers.[555] Erasmus' friend Jean Vitrier might well have been his inspiration for this manner of preaching, for he tells us that Vitrier 'brought his words out in such a way that you felt they came from a passionate and simple but yet sober heart . . .'[556] If one needed to introduce lengthy passages from

* * * * *

550 See book 3 CWE 68 736. Memory is treated thoroughly in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3; see also Quintilian 9.

551 Book 2 CWE 68 538

552 See book 2 CWE 68 539. See also *De ratione studii* CWE 24 671: 'I do not deny that memory is aided by "places" and "images," nevertheless the best memory is based on three things above all: understanding, system, and care.'

553 See Erasmus' profile of the Franciscan Jean Vitrier in Ep 1211 to Justus Jonas, 13 June 1521. See also book 2 CWE 68 507 and book 3 CWE 68 814.

554 Book 2 CWE 68 486–7

555 Cf Ep 1211:57–60 to Justus Jonas, where Erasmus describes Jean Vitrier's preparation before his sermons: 'I asked him once . . . how he prepared his mind when setting out to preach, and he replied that he usually opened Paul, and went on reading him until he felt his mind take fire. At that point he paused, praying to God with passion, until told that it was time to start.' See also Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.14.32; for a similar type of preparation before speaking to a court, see Cicero's description of the orator Galba in *Brutus* 22.87–8.

556 Ep 1211:69–70; cf Plutarch *De liberis educandis* 6c–7c.

Scripture or a long list of names, he should read them, as there is no shame in this. As in every other precept of oratorical rhetoric, Erasmus' advice on memory is based on much common sense and first-hand observation. Thorough preparation – not dominated by rigid rules of preceptive rhetoric – and prayer are the keys to simple, pure, effective preaching.

Arguably no words of Demosthenes are as well known as his response, 'Delivery ... delivery ... delivery,'[557] when asked what was the first, second, and third thing in oratory. By delivery (ὑπόκρισις, 'action') he meant the whole act of delivering the oration before an audience. This idea is often rendered by the word 'pronunciation' (*pronuntiatio*), that is, proclaiming publicly. Whatever the term, it is the crux of oratory. For Erasmus delivery consisted of the proper spiritual disposition and a set of well-coordinated rhetorical skills and harmoniously executed physical activities:[558] a natural temperance and modulation of one's voice, oral pauses, and physical motions; such would include artless movements of the face, head, brow, eyebrows, eyes, nose, lips, ears, as well as every gesture of the body made with the neck, arms, hands, fingers, together with laughter, exclamations, and the elevation or depression of the voice.[559] Action also included the general appearance of the preacher and required exhibiting an unaffected congruity with what he was about. Even one's clothing had to be appropriate, not ostentatious or shabby. The secret of such speaking, in effect, was to feign complete naturalness, as was said of Ovid's Pygmalion creating Galatea, 'So does his art conceal his art.'[560] Erasmus heaps scorn on preachers who used gimmicks in the pulpit (for example, waving the bloody shirt, putting dead men's skulls on the pulpit, having someone prowl through the congregation dressed as Satan, dressing up in strange costumes, etc). Performing in a perfectly natural manner accounted for everything when moving the emotions, the essence of the preacher's métier.

To endow the preacher with even greater help in moving the emotions, Erasmus proposes the study of commonplaces (*loci communes*), which he

* * * * *

557 See book 2 CWE 68 509–10; Plutarch *Moralia* (*Demosthenes* 845). Erasmus refers to this in *Enchiridion* CWE 66 85: 'In public speaking delivery was first, second, and third in importance, meaning that it was so essential that it was the whole of oratory'; see also Cicero *De oratore* 3.56.213, *Brutus* 37.142, *Orator* 17.56; Quintilian 11.3.6.

558 See book 3 CWE 68 passim.

559 See eg Erasmus' comment on Jean Vitrier: 'There was no purposeless gesticulation, no noisy ranting; he was entirely concentrated ...' (Ep 1211:68–9); cf *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 30–1.

560 Ovid *Metamorphoses* 10.252: *ars adeo latet arte sua* ...

defines as 'the frequently occurring sentiments that, when applied through amplification either for praise or for blame, assist in convincing people of our chosen point,'[561] and methods of amplification. Commonplaces allow one to understand how the emotions are distinguished – that is, gentler and tragic emotions – and the ways of stirring them by heightening the vigour of language.[562] Methods of amplification and developing the qualities of excellent speech (probability, clarity, vividness,[563] pleasantness, forcefulness, splendour or sublimity)[564] further enabled the preacher to appeal to the emotions by putting the narrative so vividly before the eyes of his hearers' imagination that they would feel wholly wrapped up in the drama as it played out, or as Erasmus puts it, 'unrolling Scripture itself like a fine tapestry and laying it open to view.'[565] These qualities of speech can be even further enhanced by figures of speech (*schemata*) such as repetition, conversion, complexion, exclamation, apostrophe, rhetorical questions, etc 'that contribute to the vigour and gravity of language.'[566] One need not feel uneasy about using these either; the Fathers of the church understood it as a matter of fact that God himself employed these figures of speech in his own word to us, using the medium of our human language, 'for that is how divine wisdom decided, so to speak, to babble to us in a most ordinary manner.'[567] Again, the Scriptures themselves offer the best demonstration of how this was done.[568]

* * * * *

561 See book 3 CWE 68 768. On 'commonplaces,' see Quintilian 5.13.57–60. For the history of the term, see Quirinus Breen 'The Terms "Loci Communes" and "Loci" in Melanchthon' in *Humanism and Christianity: Studies in the History of Ideas* (Grand Rapids 1968) 93–105; Joan Marie Lechner *Renaissance Concepts of the Commonplaces: An Historical Investigation of the General and Universal Ideas Used in All Argumentation and Persuasion, with Special Emphasis on the Educational and Literary Tradition of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York [1962]). On amplification, see Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 145–8.

562 See book 3 CWE 68 790–807; see also *Ratio* 187.

563 On vividness (*enargeia*, *evidentia*) see *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 211 n47.

564 Erasmus' main source for these many figures of speech are *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and Quintilian. See Lausberg §§552–754; see also *De copia* CWE 24 280–664.

565 See book 3 CWE 68 808; cf *Ratio* 188–9.

566 Book 3 CWE 68 847

567 See book 3 CWE 68 890. See also *Ratio* 197: 'Et quoniam totus ferme Christi sermo figuris ac tropis obliquus est, diligenter odorabitur theologiae candidatus, quam sustineat personam is, qui loquitur, capitis an membrorum, pastoris an gregis.'

568 See *Ratio* 259–66.

Ecclesiastes further draws heavily on Quintilian's extensive treatment of tropes such as pronomination, denomination, hyperbole, apostrophe, hypallage, enallage, and synechdoche. And as much as 'certain theologians who have been trained more in arguments than in Holy Writ' might deny it, Erasmus maintains that 'the whole of human language is packed with tropes.'[569] Understanding them not only makes the meaning of Scripture clearer and resolves difficulties in interpretation but helps one become a better preacher. By the same token, failing to recognize tropes and how they work in our speech can lead one mistakenly to reject the literal sense and resort to allegories instead. To apply tropes correctly preachers do well to study the ancient writers – poets, grammarians, rhetoricians, orators – who not only used them abundantly but identified, classified, and explained their literary purpose. No less an authority than Augustine, and many other church Fathers besides, recognized that God, the author of the sacred books, is also author of these tropes that move our hearts towards his word.[570]

Of all the rhetorical devices that appeal to the emotions Erasmus declares that metaphor[571] 'holds primacy among all the powers of language. Nothing persuades more effectively, nothing lays something more clearly before the eyes, nothing stirs emotions more powerfully, nothing contributes more dignity, charm, and attractiveness, or even eloquence . . .'[572] It is 'the source of many tropes, of comparison, image and misuse [*abusio*], riddle, allegory, proverb and fable, and any others that are akin to this kind.'[573] Under metaphor he locates allegory, to which he dedicates extended discussion as a rhetorical device and later (under biblical interpretation) as one of the four

* * * * *

569 Book 3 CWE 68 829 and 890

570 Book 3 CWE 68 829–34; see Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.29.40.

571 On metaphor see Lausberg §§558–63 and CWE 68 871–932 above.

572 Book 3 CWE 68 871. See also ibidem: 'Examples have great power both for persuading and for inflaming minds with the emulation of virtue.' Here Erasmus repeats his fundamental belief in the power of example to move listeners to embrace virtue; the example par excellence is Christ in all his works and words. See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I i 9 ('Whether Holy Scripture Should Use Metaphors?'): 'It is also befitting Holy Writ, which is proposed to all without distinction of persons – *To the wise and to the unwise I am a debtor* (Rom 1:14) – that spiritual truths be expounded by means of figures taken from corporeal things, in order that thereby even the simple who are unable by themselves to grasp intellectual things may be able to understand it . . .' See Lausberg §§558–63; Quintilian 12.4.1; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.49.62 (*exemplum*); and *De copia* CWE 24 606–20.

573 Book 3 CWE 68 930

senses of Scripture.[574] Taking readers through catachresis, similes, image, similitude, Erasmus proffers abundant examples of how these figures have been used effectively by sacred and other authors, and how they might be used by preachers of his day. Drawing upon Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*,[575] he demonstrates further how a preacher might take up the trope of similitude using the grand, middling, and humble styles of speaking[576] depending on the nature of the similitude, noting also many differences (for example, harsh and gentle, fiery and calm, etc) in the manner of speech. Tropes abound; some even 'have not yet found a name among rhetoricians or grammarians.'[577] If one will not acknowledge that these tropes in Sacred Scripture are the divine author's way to bring us to understand, he can never understand the lessons God inscribed there for our spiritual enlightenment.[578]

Because the study of language's rich complexities serves as the foundation for understanding God's word, it is imperative the preacher go about this diligently. Taking up the best authors will be of particular benefit for linguistic comprehension and power of expression.[579] Among the best, Erasmus gives the unqualified first place to the authors of Sacred Scripture who were divinely inspired to record God's word and whose eloquence renders all other writings pale by comparison. Erasmus invites preachers to ponder daily the fecundity of Christ's teaching, Paul's manifold ways of handling sacred themes, Peter's and Paul's speeches in Acts, and so forth. In

* * * * *

574 See *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 216 n117: 'For Erasmus, allegory is very often merely a synonym for "metaphor" or "figure." It is what is left, so to speak, when the "grammatical" (historical or literal) sense of a word or words is unintelligible or unacceptable to the reverent reader or commentator (for example in Gen 3:8, God "walking in the garden in the cool of the day" or in Gen 6:6 repenting that he had made man on the earth) . . .'

575 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.17.34–4.28.61

576 See book 3 CWE 68 879–80; 'styles of speaking' (*tres orationis characteres*).

577 See book 3 CWE 68 890; cf Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.29.40; and *Ratio* 190: 'Poeticis figuris ac tropis scatent undique prophetarum litterae . . .' Erasmus understands the word 'trope' (τρόπος) in three ways: 'a figure of speech, a manner, and a person's life and character'; see book 3 CWE 68 934. The third sense of the word applies to the 'moral' or 'tropological' sense of Scripture, where 'the narrative itself indicates in passing whatever contributes to good character.' See book 3 CWE 68 934.

578 Cf *Ratio* 180.

579 See eg *De ratione studii* CWE 24 667: 'If the teacher is not available, then (as the next best thing) the best authors must certainly be used. Personally, I should like them to be very limited in number but carefully chosen . . .'

addition to Scripture, Erasmus provides a ranking of the most useful authors among the Greeks and Latins, whether Christian or pagan, prosaists or poets. For the sheer power of language his top selections among the pagans are also Quintilian's: 'There is no one to prefer, or scarcely even to compare, to Demosthenes and Cicero.'[580] One should not however neglect other distinguished pagan authors. Aristotle, for example, 'contributes a great deal to judgment and to knowledge, rather less to popular language';[581] Plato is commendable, for 'his comparisons lend one a sort of guiding hand towards knowledge of the truth.' Special mention goes to Plutarch, 'whose books deserve to be learnt word for word' and from whose writings Christians like Basil and Chrysostom drew heavily.[582] One can find excellent speeches in the Latin authors Livy, Tacitus, Seneca, and Sallust ('easily the most eloquent of all, with the exception of Cicero alone').[583]

Of the Greek and Latin church Fathers Erasmus recommends especially those regarded for their eloquence, sound exegetical methods, teaching, usefulness, propriety, and suitability for imitation. Among the Greeks he gives highest marks to Basil, who 'is crystal clear, devout, sound, pleasantly grave, and gravely pleasant, with not a trace of verbose affectation.'[584] Next to him stands Gregory of Nazianzus, and together with them John Chrysostom, to whom *Ecclesiastes* gives prominent attention. Other lights of the Eastern church follow: Athanasius is commended for his teaching and, Erasmus maintains, were his sermons extant, they would be as excellent as his teachings. Origen is eminently useful for his teaching but does not rank as high as the others; 'but as he calls his sermons "homilies," that is, conversations, his stylistic level hardly ever rises, but he is entirely occupied with

* * * * *

580 Book 2 CWE 68 489

581 Book 2 CWE 68 489

582 Book 2 CWE 68 490. Many editions of Plutarch's works were in circulation at this time. In March 1509, Aldus published Plutarch's *Moralia* under the title *Plutarchi opuscula* LXXXXII, edited by Demetrius Ducas, and in March 1531 Erasmus himself published the *Apophthegmata Plutarchi* with Froben. Erasmus draws much from Plutarch's works, especially *De liberis educandis*, which offers much practical advice that is reflected in *Ecclesiastes*; for example, it urges one 'to study knowledge at its source' (8B).

583 Book 3 CWE 68 777 and book 1 193. Erasmus recommends the speeches in Sallust, but Quintilian cautions his readers against imitating 'the famous terseness of Sallust (though in his case of course it is a merit) . . .'; see Quintilian 4.2.45. Sallust's *Opera* were well known and available. Erasmus likely had access to the edition by Pomponius Laetus and Johannes Britannicus, printed at Venice in 1494–1500 by Christophorus de Pensis.

584 Book 1 193

teaching, and he touches none of the emotions except those that the subject itself stirs.'[585] Elsewhere Erasmus admits that Origen sometimes got carried away by excessive zeal in his exegeses, which were often immoderate in the use of allegories.[586]

Except for Jerome, Erasmus maintains that the Latin Fathers do not attain the level of eloquence of the Greeks, nor are they their equals in exegesis (for reasons noted below); they are nonetheless impressive and worthy of imitation. Jerome, by way of exception, 'is appropriate for acquiring every kind of speaking ability.'[587] Had he been a bishop, he would likely have left sermons of distinction, if not pre-eminence among the Latin Fathers.[588] As

* * * * *

585 See book 2 CWE 68 492. Origen, however, is given the highest rank for his exegesis; see Godin 139: 'Aux Grecs revient la première place.Dans ce classement préférentiel, non chronologique, Origène occupe un rang hors pair. Son statut est vraiment privilégié: il est en quelque sorte hors-concours, incomparable.' See also *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 31–2.

586 Book 3 CWE 68 917; see also *Ratio* 284.

587 Book 2 CWE 68 494. See Erasmus' comments in his dedicatory letter to William Warham for the edition of Jerome's works, CWE 61 especially 6–7; and *Hieronymi Vita* CWE 61 57 on Jerome's eloquence and efforts 'to gain mastery of many languages'; '... he dealt with subjects that do not easily lend themselves to embellishment or take on rhetorical brilliance, and he even dictated a great deal. Despite this his eloquence proved to be of such high quality that there has been no one in our memory with whom we can compare him in this regard. And yet our age has seen outstanding men who would not have been deemed lacking in eloquence even in the time of Cicero. Chief among them are Lorenzo Valla, Ermolao Barbaro, Angelo Poliziano, Giovanni Pico, and our own Rodolphus Agricola.' Erasmus in fact declares: 'For indeed Cicero himself would have had to change his language if he were Jerome. The good qualities of style you admire in one author may be different from those you admire in another. Upon one person, Jerome, so many gifts were lavished at the same time that you find in him what you miss even in Cicero. Cicero speaks; Jerome thunders and fulminates. We admire the former's language; we admire the latter's heart as well' (58–9). 'Even Greece herself ... has no one to compare with our Jerome' (59). For Erasmus and St Jerome, see especially John C. Olin 'Erasmus and Saint Jerome: The Close Bond and its Significance' ERSY 7 (1987) 33–53; idem introduction to CWE 61 xiii–xxxvii, especially xvi–xvii; idem 'Erasmus and the Church Fathers' in *Six Essays on Erasmus and a Translation of Erasmus' Letter to Carondelet, 1523* (New York 1979) 35–8; Eugene F. Rice *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore 1985); André Godin 'Erasme biographe patristique: Hieronymi Stridonensis vita' *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 50 (1988) 691–706.

588 In his *Contra Rufinum* (*Apology Against Rufinus*), Jerome states that he preached daily to the monks at Bethlehem. But until the nineteenth-century scholar Dom

much as Erasmus admires Jerome, at times he will disapprove of his contorted use of allegory (see below). He also criticizes the North African writers: Tertullian he finds 'harsh,' and to some degree Augustine who, though commendable in many respects, suffered from his native land's penchant for the florid style and for turning everything to a spiritual meaning[589] in his often overworked allegories and in the devices he uses to win the attention of his somewhat jaded congregation.[590] In general, however, Erasmus appraises the North African Fathers as outstanding doctors of the church and commends for their eloquence and benefit Cyprian and Lactantius, both of whom seemed to have escaped the linguistic defects of North African Latinity. The Iberian Prudentius, though writing in verse, similarly receives high praise. Yet on the whole, and with the exception of Jerome, Erasmus does not warmly endorse the Latin Fathers for imitation; Ambrose, for example, was 'a great light of the church,' though 'not so suited to this age.'[591] Nonetheless he encourages readers to read these and other authors like Leo the Great (440–61), Maximus of Turin (d 408–23), and Fulgentius (c 468–533), 'who have treated this kind of oratory with some success.'[592] After the age of Augustine, Erasmus sees Latin in rapid decline, largely because of the 'barbarian' influences that corrupted the language's purity. In Erasmus' view of language we detect what one might call a natural entropy; Latin's fate, much like that of Hebrew and Greek, was bound to degenerate owing to 'the corruption caused by ordinary people, who always turn everything for the worse.'[593] For this reason Erasmus advises against imitating

* * * * *

Germain Morin identified a series of homilies and attributed them to Jerome, no one, including Erasmus, believed that any of Jerome's sermons were extant. See the introduction to Jerome's homilies on Mark by Jean-Louis Gourdain: Jerome *Homélies sur Marc* Sources chrétiennes 494 (Paris 2005) 9–21; *The Homilies of Saint Jerome* 2 vols FOC 48 & 57 (Washington, DC 1966); *S. Hieronymi Presbyteri tractatus homiliae in Psalmos, in Marci Evangelium aliaque varia argumenta* CCSL 78. See Erasmus' comments on Jean Vitrier's preference for Ambrose, Cyprian, Jerome, and Origen in Ep 1211. On Jean Vitrier and Erasmus, see Godin *Spiritualité*; Godin; and Godin 'Érasme et le modèle origénien de la prédication' in *Colloquia Erasmiana Turonensia* ed Jean-Claude Margolin, 2 vols (Toronto 1972) II 807–20.

589 Book 3 CWE 68 968; on his 'florid style' see book 3 CWE 68 494.

590 For Erasmus' preference for these other authors over Augustine, see Georges Chantraine 'L'Apologie ad Latomum' *Scrinium* II 57.

591 Book 2 CWE 68 493

592 Book 2 CWE 68 495

593 Book 2 CWE 68 485–6. See *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 390: 'It is no good writing in the language of the man in the street if you wish your work to stay fresh and to last for ever. Once upon a time a large part of Europe and

St Benedict[594] or Pope Gregory the Great, who though 'simple and devout in his sermons' suffers in his Latin from his contrived *clausulae*.[595] After him, with the exception of Bernard of Clairvaux, there is no one any preacher should wish to imitate, and even Bernard's value is diminished for he was 'a speaker more by nature than by art, witty and pleasant, yet ready to excite emotion'; but because his sermons were addressed to monks, they offer little to preachers today.[596] In fact, Erasmus finds little use for anyone after the mellifluent abbot of Clairvaux; since the twelfth century Europe has been awash in preachers of the worst sort.

For oratorical guidance and inspiration Erasmus finds little to commend among the 'modern' authors. Thomas Aquinas, by way of exception, he thinks probably would have been good at preaching; 'Scotus and his ilk,' on the other hand, 'are useful for a knowledge of ideas, useless for speaking.'[597] From Scotus' day to his own, Erasmus sees preaching in a wasteland,

* * * * *

> Africa together with a smaller part of Asia spoke Latin or Greek. Now, look at the number of barbarian languages there are, which the common people have created out of Latin alone! Look at the number of different dialects even within single countries, as in Italy, France, and Spain. So it is important for scholars to confine themselves to those languages that have almost exclusively been used in learned writing. The reason is that they do not depend for their guarantee on ordinary people. The people are poor custodians of quality, whereas the guarantee of the integrity of the learned languages rests in the books written by good authors.'

594 Erasmus describes Benedict's Latin as 'grim' (*tetricus*); book 2 CWE 68 504–5.

595 Book 2 CWE 68 494. Steven M. Oberhelmann *Rhetoric and Homiletics in Fourth-Century Christian Literature: Prose Rhythm, Oratorical Style, and Preaching in the Works of Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine* (Atlanta c 1991); and his *Prose Rhythm in Latin Literature of the Roman Empire: First Century B.C. to Fourth Century A.D.* (Lewiston, NY 2003) chapter 1, especially 9–11. On the Latin prose style of Gregory the Great, see Sister Kathleen Brazzel, *The Clausulae in the Works of St. Gregory the Great*, in Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Latin Language and Literature 11 (Washington, DC 1939). The author takes a more favorable stance towards Gregory's style than does Erasmus. See also Mary Borromeo Dunn *The Style of the Letters of St. Gregory the Great*, The Catholic University of America Patristic Studies 32 (Washington, DC 1931).

596 Book 2 CWE 68 494–5, 504. For Erasmus' views on Christian writers of middle Latin, see Paul Gerhard Schmidt 'Erasmus und die mittellateinische Literatur' in *Erasmus und Europa* ed August Buck, Wolfenbütteler Abhandlungen zur Renaissanceforschung 7 (Wiesbaden 1988) 129–37.

597 Book 2 CWE 68 495–6. Erasmus is likely referring to Scotus' writings in general, since there are no extant copies of his sermons, although apparently he did preach. See Schneyer 166; see also *Vita Hieronymi* CWE 61 57, where Erasmus comments on the moderns 'who lacked elegance of style. In this class we

for 'there came a type of preacher suited perhaps to the theatre of his time but quite ignorant of the art and displaying little wisdom';[598] but he gives scarce mention of any who achieved notoriety in their day, many of whom had printed sermon collections that would have been available,[599] such as Jordan von Quedlinburg (1300–80),[600] Jacopo da Varagine (c 1230–98),[601] Roberto Caracciolo (Fra Roberto da Lecce, O.F.M. c 1425–95),[602] Gabriel Biel

* * * * *

include Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, and Scotus; Jerome includes Jovinianus, Vigilantius, and Rufinus.' See Erasmus *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 171–243; see especially 230 n190 for the comment on J.-C. Margolin who 'perceives significant areas of agreement on certain major themes – liberty, love, individuality – between Scotus and Erasmus. He concludes that Erasmus was *un scotiste sans le savoir*.' See also Thompson 'Better Teachers' 128: 'In the vocabulary of Erasmus, "Scotus" and "Scotist" are generic terms for the whole catalogue of scholastic philosophers and theologians: the academic Establishment, from Thomas Aquinas to Erasmus' own day; typified in his pages by the Sorbonne. He is harder on Scotists than others, both because of his personal experiences with them and because of their Franciscan affiliations. To him the Scotists were always the worst of a bad lot.' See also book 2 CWE 68 612–13 and Ep 1211:24–7 for his comment on Jean Vitrier's view of Johannes Duns Scotus' teachings: 'The niceties of Scotist philosophy he had imbibed as a boy, and neither wholly rejected them (for there were clever things in it, he thought, though expressed in inelegant words) nor again did he set much store by them.' In *Ratio* 183, Erasmus views Thomas Aquinas as 'the most diligent of the recent [theologians].'

598 Book 2 CWE 68 496

599 For a bibliography of such works printed in 1503, which would have been available to Erasmus, see Hirsch especially 210: 'It is likely that most, if not all, the titles were available in the libraries of Basel and in nearby monasteries.'

600 Jordan von Quedlinburg, Saxon Augustinian monk, *Sermones de tempore* (Strassburg: [Printer of the Jordanus] 1483); see Schneyer 170; and 'Jordan of Quedlinburg' NCE 7 1032–3.

601 Sermons of Jacopo da Varagine, Dominican, author of the *Legenda sanctorum* (later known as *Legenda aurea*), *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis* (Basel: Johann Amerbach 1488). See 'James of Voragine' ODCC 861.

602 On Fra Roberto Caracciolo (Roberto da Lecce), see Telle ' "To every thing there is a season . . ." ' 13–24. Telle notes that 'Caracciolo's sermons were printed, *in his lifetime*, in about eighty editions – a prestigious number and all incunabula, that is printed before 1500 – which means that his fame became magnified and broadcast as an author all over Europe by the magic of the printing press' (20). Yale's Beineke Library has numerous collections of his sermons; eg *Sermones de adventu*, etc. (Strassburg: The R-printer (Adolf Rusch), not after 1475); *Hec est tabula o[mn]ium sermonum [con]tento[rum] in hoc volumine* (Venice: Gabriel de Grassis de Papia, between 1480–5). See also Cynthia L. Polecritti *Preaching Peace in Renaissance Italy: San Bernardino of Siena and His Audience* (Washington, DC 2000) 69–73.

(c 1425–95),[603] Johannes Herolt, O.P. (c 1380–1468),[604] and Girolamo Savonarola (1452–98),[605] among others.[606] Surprisingly, except for the last two, many noted preachers who lived just before and during Erasmus' lifetime, such as Bernardino of Siena (1380–1444), Johannes Brugman (c 1405–73), Nicholas of Cusa (1401–64), Johann Tetzel (1465–1519), Michel Menot (d 1518), Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg (1445–1510), and Bernardino Ochino (1487–1564), to name but a few, merit not a word.[607] Erasmus does bring up Jean Gerson, but only to say he 'will help a preacher very little, at least in improving his ability to speak.'[608] Like the 'recent theologians' (*neoterici*) – William of Occam, Johannes Duns Scotus, William Durandus, Nicholas of Lyra, John Capreolus, Paul of Burgos – preachers of the recent past merit no praise.[609] In fact, Erasmus' anecdotes about Roberto Caracciolo's and others' antics make clear that their styles of preaching – though perhaps once popular among Italian audiences – are to be altogether avoided.[610]

While giving preference to the Latin church Fathers, Erasmus does not refrain from criticizing their Latinity, occasional lapses in judgment, and exegetical excesses especially in the use of allegory. He warmly endorses them as long as one exercises discretion in selecting what is valuable for preaching and rejecting what is not conducive to godliness. Apart from Scripture, the Fathers of the church are still the best guides, and the aspiring

* * * * *

603 *Sermones* (Tübingen: Johann Otmar for Friedrich Meynberger 1500)

604 *Sermones Discipuli de tempore et de sanctis cum promptuario exemplorum* (Reutlingen: Michael Greyff c 1479–82)

605 *Prediche de fra Hieronymo per tutto l'anno . . . sopra li Evanzelii, Psalmi & Propheti* (Venice: Cesaro Arrivabeno 1520)

606 See eg the list of published sermons given at the papal court between c 1450–1521 in O'Malley *Praise and Blame* 245–55.

607 Erasmus mentions an unidentified preacher ('Paradise') in book 2 496; perhaps he is mistaken, although he might be referring to a preacher from the Brigittine monastery of Paradiso in Florence.

608 John Gerson (1363–1429), theologian, chancellor of the University of Paris (1395), reformer, and strong proponent of conciliarism at the Council of Constance (1414–18), wrote numerous theological treatises and sermons. See G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes *Jean Gerson, Apostle of Unity: His Church Politics and Ecclesiology* (Leiden 1999); 'Gerson, Jean le Charlier de' ODCC 669–70; and especially Christoph Burger 'Preaching for Members of the University in Latin, for Parishioners in French: Jean Gerson (1363–1429) on "Blessed Are They That Mourn"' in *Constructing the Medieval Sermon* ed Roger Andersson (Turnhout 2007) 207–20.

609 For a list of preachers active in the European lands at this time, see Schneyer 189–230.

610 See book 3 CWE 68 804–6.

preacher should learn to read them reverently, all the while being careful not to replicate their blemishes.[611] As for why one must be judicious in reading the Fathers, Erasmus explains that they sometimes stray into overallegorization, misinterpret the meaning of the text, or impose their own meaning upon a passage. He points out their aberrations, however, 'not to castigate men who have greatly assisted the Christian religion, whose memory we revere with very good reason as sacrosanct, but in order to make the preacher better trained to handle the Scriptures soundly.'[612] In essence when taking up the ancient Christian authors it all comes down to the principle of discrimination or good judgment, a quality in which even some Fathers were found wanting on occasion.

Because the marrow of the preacher's office is teaching 'the celestial philosophy,' Erasmus asserts that the preacher must be continuously exercised in understanding Scripture, for clerical membership itself bestows no qualification to preach or interpret Scripture. Unlike the apostles who were instructed by living with Christ and given the gift of his Spirit at Pentecost to infuse their preaching with divine force, clergy of the postapostolic age require rigorous methodical instruction. To this end Erasmus lays down numerous procedural rules throughout *Ecclesiastes* for interpreting Scripture, allotting to book 3 his most thorough exposition of hermeneutical principles, much of it recapitulating and expanding his teaching in *Ratio seu compendium verae theologiae* (1519),[613] as well as drawing heavily on Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*. He also culls material from other church Fathers like Origen, Gregory of Nazianzus, Jerome, and, of course, from Lorenzo Valla, whose *Adnotationes in Novum Testamentum* had earlier changed Erasmus' way of thinking about the interpretation of Scripture.[614] For handling Scripture in

* * * * *

611 See book 3 CWE 68 930.

612 Book 3 CWE 68 930

613 In February 1516, Erasmus published at the Froben press his *Methodus*, which was included with his *Paraclesis* and *Apologia* among the introductory writings of his first Greek and corrected Latin edition of the New Testament. Over the next years Erasmus revised and expanded *Methodus*, first renaming it *Ratio seu methodus compendio perveniendi ad veram theologiam*. This revision was published as a separate piece at Louvain in November 1518 at the press of Theodoricus Martinus (Dirk Martens). Two months later the same work was published by Froben, though with a slightly different title, *Ratio seu compendium verae theologiae*, and was included with Erasmus' newly and greatly emended edition of the New Testament, which he published with Froben in March 1519. See Holborn xiv–xv. For a comparison of *Ratio* with *Ecclesiastes*, see Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 55–60.

614 Erasmus had Valla's *Adnotationes* printed by Bade in Paris in 1505. See Erasmus' letter to Christopher Fisher and his edition of Valla's text in Laurentius

the pulpit Erasmus provides extensive instruction on the exegetical methods one should have mastered.[615] Acknowledging the current practice of interpreting Scripture according to the four senses (literal, tropological or moral, allegorical, and anagogical),[616] he favours the practice of the early church Fathers who distinguished only two senses: the literal (also referred to as the historical or grammatical sense) and the spiritual (often referred to by the Fathers as the tropological or allegorical or anagogical sense, 'but with no distinction between them').[617] Erasmus in fact shows with the story of

* * * * *

Valla *Opera omnia* ed Eugenio Garin (Turin 1962) I 801–95. See too Ep 182, especially 226–31; and Erika Rummel *Erasmus' 'Annotations' on the New Testament: From Philologist to Theologian* (Toronto 1986); Salvatore I. Camporeale *Lorenzo Valla: Umanesimo e teologia* (Florence 1972) 3–4, 23–4, 277–403; and his 'Poggio Bracciolini contra Lorenzo Valla. Les "Orationes in Laurentium Vallam"' in *Penser entre les lignes: Philologie et philosophie au Quattrocento* ed Fosca Mariani Zini (Paris 2001) 251–73; Bentley *Humanists* 32–69, 112–93; Christopher S. Celenza 'Renaissance Humanism and the New Testament: Lorenzo Valla's Annotations to the Vulgate' *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 24 (1994) 33–52.

615 Erasmus sets forth the principles of allegorical exegesis in *Enchiridion* CWE 66 68–9 and *Ratio* 274–84. Many excellent studies have analyzed Erasmus' biblical hermeneutics in detail; see eg Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 32–9; Payne; John William Aldridge *The Hermeneutic of Erasmus* Basil Studies of Theology 2 (Zürich-Richmond [1966]); Chantraine 334–62. See also Thompson 'Better Teachers'; Albert Rabil Jr *Erasmus and the New Testament* (San Antonio 1972); Chomarat I 541–86; Bentley *Humanists* 112–93; Rummel *Erasmus' 'Annotations'*; Kathy Eden 'Erasmian Hermeneutics: The Road to *sola scriptura*' in her *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition* (New Haven and London 1997) 64–78; see especially Godin 302–47; Béné *Érasme* 365–425; Augustijn *Erasmus* 89–106; Peter Walter *Theologie aus dem Geist der Rhetorik. Zur Schriftauslegung des Erasmus von Rotterdam* Tübinger Studien zur Theologie und Philosophie 1 (Mainz 1991) especially 194–8, 'Die Rolle der Kirchenväter.'

616 Book 3 CWE 68 932. See also Godin 323–7, and *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 216–19, 216 n117, for Erasmus' use of the four senses of Scripture: 'He has reservations about, but does not altogether reject, the conventional (medieval) fourfold distinctions . . .'

617 See book 3 CWE 68 933: 'The early doctors, however, recognize only two interpretations, the grammatical (or literal or, if you prefer, the historical) and the spiritual, which they call by a variety of names, sometimes "tropology," sometimes "allegory," sometimes "anagogy," but with no distinction between them.' For the four senses of Scripture, see Beryl Smalley *The Bible in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, Ind 1964) 1–26 and passim. See also de Lubac *Medieval Exegesis* I and II; CHB II chapter 6 155–279 and 492–505. See also Harry Caplan 'The Four Senses of Scriptural Interpretation and the Mediaeval Theory of Preaching' *Speculum* 4 (1929) 282–90; Augustijn *Erasmus* 98–100; Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 95–133, especially 101–6; and Grünwald 217–20. See *Vita Hieronymi*

Abraham's reception of the three men in Genesis 18 how a preacher can draw from the literal meaning of this passage a spiritual sense according to a tropological, allegorical, and anagogical interpretation,[618] and he demonstrates how the preacher can differentiate between rhetorical devices such as an allegory and a type. But more often Erasmus speaks of two senses of Scripture (literal and spiritual) as used by the church Fathers, the earliest and the most authentic interpreters of the word.

As a basic principle for the interpretation of Scripture, Erasmus demands that we believe that everything written in the Old Law teaches us about Christ.[619] Calling Christians to godliness and teaching the philosophy of Christ therefore demand that one first know the Old Law, its 'narration, precepts, types, ceremonies, and promises,'[620] and the New Law, which explains the old and contains 'narration, teaching, instructions, sacraments, the display of promises, grace, and the most perfect of all examples of godliness . . .'[621] Similarly, the teaching of the New Law explains openly 'what was wrapped in riddles in the Old Law and draws out the mystical sense hidden in the letter of the Hebrew writings.'[622] The types and prophecies of the Old Law were fulfilled perfectly in Christ, who sometimes tells us himself when this occurred, as he did at the beginning of his public life in the synagogue at Nazareth when he explained the meaning of Isaiah's words, 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me . . .' (Luke 4:18).[623] Finally, evangelists or persons in the Scriptures of the New Law often explain how Christ's words and activities fulfilled everything spoken of him and the types of him in the Old Law.[624]

* * * * *

CWE 61 53: 'Jerome makes no distinction between the first three [senses of Scripture].'

618 See book 3 CWE 68 934–9. See also Godin 327–9; cf *Ratio* 284: 'Porro in tractandis allegoriis felicissimus artifex est Origenes . . .'

619 See book 3 CWE 68 1033, 1038. See *Ratio* 209; for this idea see also de Lubac *Medieval Exegesis* I 225–67, 'The Unity of the Two Testaments.' Cf *Ratio* 295, where Erasmus says of Origen: 'Inter quos praecipuus est Origenes, sic hanc Venerem exorsus, ut nemo post illum ausit manus apponere'; and ibidem 'velut Origenem, qui sic est primus, ut nemo cum illo conferri possit . . .'

620 Book 4 CWE 68 1033

621 Book 4 CWE 68 1036

622 Book 4 CWE 68 1037

623 Book 4 CWE 68 1038 (Luke 4:18)

624 See *Ratio* 209: 'There is almost nothing Christ did that those divine prophets did not describe'; 210: '. . . in the same way Christ did nothing that was not adumbrated by the types of the law, that was not predicted by the oracles of the prophets . . .'

Contrary to some contemporaries, Erasmus contends that Scripture is not always easy to understand. Granted there are many clear teachings and sayings in Holy Writ, still not everything is obvious.[625] He recalls those Fathers of the church who testify that many passages continue to defy explanation and cause us to stumble when we try to make sense of them, such as Moses' injunctions in Deuteronomy against joining an ass to an ox when ploughing (22:10) and wearing clothing woven from linen and wool (22:11).[626] To assist the preacher with such mystifying passages, Erasmus lays down the principle that 'it is the custom of Scripture often to conceal mysteries that deserve worship beneath an unworthy covering.'[627] So we must believe that not a word of what we have fails in this regard; in fact 'in the canonical texts not even a point has been placed by chance.'[628] God encoded in the books of the Hebrews spiritual meanings that revealed his word from the very beginning, and if we seek earnestly in our prayers, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, sometimes these meanings are made known to us. It is the divine plan too that we exercise ourselves continually to move from the literal sense to uncover deeper spiritual meanings.[629] Erasmus in effect envisions the Holy Spirit as progressively illuminating his church in the mysteries of his word. Though the spiritual significances of many passages may not yet be apparent, as surely as other meanings of Scripture have become clear to us over time, so we should expect hopefully that with prayer and meditation these too will become understood in the future as the church advances in godliness towards the final age. Moreover, it will be every preacher's duty to beg God daily through his prayers, work, and meditation to yield the meaning of these sacred passages, that he might become an evermore effective instrument in advancing our knowledge of his word and producing an abundant harvest of souls.

A further foundational principle for dealing with obscure passages in Scripture is to believe that Holy Writ's primary characteristic is its simplicity and that Scripture 'was prepared for simple people.'[630] This principle applies to preaching as well, for it too is to be done sincerely, simply, purely. Simplicity, in fact, distinguishes Erasmus' entire approach to laying

* * * * *

625 Cf *Ratio* 187 and 259–66.
626 Book 3 CWE 68 1000
627 Book 2 CWE 68 528
628 Book 2 CWE 68 528. See Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 118–26.
629 See also *Ratio* 259–62 on stories from Scripture that can be made fruitful with an allegorical interpretation; see also 275–7.
630 *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 314

out Scripture, and it is this single quality he emphasizes repeatedly in his *Paraphrases* and in other writings dealing with the Bible.[631] God deals with us simply in his teaching; Christ did the same in his earthly life, and so should the preacher in speaking to his congregation. Unfortunately, Erasmus observes, with preaching, like monasticism, 'with the progress of time, little by little' that original simplicity and godliness of the church began to change for the worse with wealth and new ceremonies.[632] But in the beginning it was not this way, and even now God calls us back, speaking to us simply. For this reason the preacher should seek first to grasp Scripture's plain or humble meaning; for in dealing with benighted humanity, God's wont is to accommodate (*attemperat*) himself to his creatures, taking their times, circumstances, and needs into account,[633] reaching out to humanity in its ignorance and sinfulness.[634]

Much of what God communicates to us is straightforward and can be taken at the plain or literal meaning of the text, but at times he invites us to go beyond this to deeper spiritual levels. As God's communication with humankind in the Scriptures employs human ways of speaking, so like human speech his words often have a double meaning, 'one is more straightforward, the other allegorical and more sublime.'[635] The preacher's task is to understand both using his understanding of language. However, not all Erasmus' contemporaries conceded the usefulness of grammar and rhetoric to the detriment of dialectic, an attitude Erasmus blames on their almost exclusive training in scholastic method: 'Certain theologians who have been

* * * * *

631 See *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 314 and n99: 'Simplicity: this represents Erasmus' standard for understanding Scripture in his *Annotationes*, his prefaces, and his controversy with Luther . . .'

632 See the letter to Paul Volz, Ep 858:581–3, where Erasmus describes the process of degeneration in monastic life: 'Such were the first beginnings of monasticism, and such its patriarchs. Then gradually, with the passage of time, wealth grew, and with wealth ceremonies; and the genuine piety and simplicity grew cool.' See also *Ratio* 201, 203, 249, especially 201: 'Iam quintum tempus facere licebit ecclesiae prolabentis ac degenerantis a pristino vigore Christiani spiritus, ad quod opinor pertinere, quae dicit dominus in evangelio, quod abundante iniquitate refrigescet caritas multorum . . .' See also Tracy (1) 102–3.

633 See *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 315 n102.

634 See for example his dedicatory letter to Domenico Grimani for *Paraphrasis in epistolam ad Romanos*, Ep 710:195–9, especially 1965–7 where he describes his effort to accommodate the needs of his various readers. See also Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle *Rhetoric and Reform: Erasmus' Civil Dispute with Luther* (Cambridge, Mass 1983), and McConica 'Grammar of Consent.'

635 See book 1 316.

trained more in arguments than in Holy Writ . . . think it ridiculous to mention hyperbole when expounding Scripture – as if all the tropes that the grammarians have gathered from the poets are not found in the divine books . . .'[636] But it is only with the knowledge of the biblical languages, grammar, and rhetoric that the diligent preacher, with constant prayer and zeal, can unlock the genuine meaning of Scripture by comparing scriptural passages with each other and investigating how language is used by the biblical writers.[637] The *docta pietas* of the preacher therefore distinguishes itself from the dialectical techniques of the scholastic theologian in understanding grammar and rhetoric as foundational: biblical interpretation begins by establishing precisely the literal sense and factual details, and then probes for spiritual senses, if such appear warranted.[638]

Erasmus grows even more emphatic about the need for linguistic preparation, declaring that dialecticians who neglect to determine the literal or grammatical sense of Scripture, especially when interpreting Scripture allegorically, are simply wrong headed and prone to error. Additionally, they miss the opportunity to bring spiritual nourishment to their listeners. It is, after all, in the allegorical sense that the greatest spiritual benefits can be found because 'whatever is imparted through an allegory affects our minds more powerfully than anything related plainly.'[639] But Erasmus also advises caution; allegory is the most difficult rhetorical device to handle; 'no trope and no figure gives preachers more difficulty than allegory,'[640] and the dangers that lurk in allegorical interpretation can be considerable.

Erasmus adopts the ancient rhetoricians' definition of allegory as 'a continuous metaphor,'[641] but finds that the word in Sacred Scripture is given an even wider application and may include 'any trope at all.' It may even

* * * * *

636 Book 3 CWE 68 829; cf *Ratio* 268–70, where he discusses various hyperboles in Scripture.

637 See book 3. Erasmus might well have in mind his dispute with Jacobus Latomus (Jacques Masson), *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* CWE 71 62–3. Contrary to Augustine (*De doctrina christiana* 2.11.16: '. . . because of the diversity of translators a knowledge of those languages is necessary'), Latomus seems to have rejected the idea that one any longer needed to know these biblical languages to determine the meaning of a scriptural passage.

638 See too Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.1; Chomarat *Grammaire* 1 680; and Hoffman *Rhetoric* 101–33.

639 Book 3 CWE 68 962; cf *Ratio* 259–62. See also *Enchiridion* CWE 66 69, where Erasmus mentions that 'Theologians of the present day either practically despise allegory or treat it very cooly . . .'

640 Book 3 CWE 68 896

641 Book 3 CWE 68 932

include a type, which brings forth a deeper spiritual meaning in the plain words of the biblical text, even where there is no trope, as Paul demonstrates in his exegesis of the story of Sarah and Isaac, Hagar and Ishmael (Gal 4:21–5:1), where 'the deeds themselves inherently signify a loftier meaning.'[642] Some spiritual meanings of these types we know because Christ and Paul and the sacred writers revealed them to us, such as the meaning of the bronze serpent Moses lifted up in the desert and the meaning of Jonah's triduum in the belly of the whale.[643] It is this deeper sense of Scripture that draws us closer to the philosophy of Christ for, as Erasmus explains, 'the more recondite something is, the more excellent it is and the more effective.'[644] Before one can grasp this deeper spiritual sense, however, he must not only determine the grammatical-historical sense as well as possible but then observe other procedural criteria, such as basing allegories especially upon those proof texts of Scripture (*scripturarum testimonia*) whose authority has never been doubted by the Hebrews, Greeks, or Latins,[645] and selecting those books of Scripture (for example, the Pentateuch) that 'have greater appeal' when introducing allegory and anagogy.[646]

Understanding the grammatical-historical sense requires above all that one establish the correct reading of the text, without which one might struggle endlessly to get an allegory to fit. Because of faulty, obscure, or ambiguous translations, and sometimes because the manuscript has been corrupted by careless scribes or even by perverters,[647] some Fathers interpreted passages of Scripture that simply made no sense; Erasmus illustrates this with the example of Augustine's exegesis of Psalm 34 (33 Vulgate), where David faces Abimelech, a text based upon a widely inaccurate Latin translation deriving from the Septuagint. Seeing Augustine 'turning everything into a spiritual meaning,' Erasmus exclaims, 'What strained allegories St Augustine uses in expounding the heading of Psalm 33, not through affectation but misled by an incorrect translation!'[648] Evidently Augustine's limited knowledge of Greek and ignorance of Hebrew accounted for his failure to grasp

* * * * *

642 Book 3 CWE 68 932
643 Book 3 CWE 68 959; see John 3:14–15 and Jon 2:1–10; see also book 4 CWE 68 1034.
644 See book 2 CWE 68 682.
645 Book 3 CWE 68 967
646 Book 3 CWE 68 968
647 Book 3 CWE 68 973. Erasmus makes this more precise a few lines later: 'The wickedness of interpolators never ceases, and the yawning of scribes never ceases.'
648 Book 3 CWE 68 921

the literal meaning of certain scriptural passages, hence his sometimes inapt allegories.

With his instruction on allegory Erasmus offers yet a further corollary, that 'unless the literal or grammatical sense on which the allegory is constructed has been understood and weighed accurately, for if there has been a mistake in the foundation, whatever you construct upon it cannot fit';[649] often the result is that the interpretation becomes ridiculous, 'since many props are needed to hold in place what has been twisted violently once one departs from the genuineness of Scripture.'[650] Here he adds that if one has found the plain meaning of a passage of Scripture and that meaning is consistent with other passages of Scripture, then there is no need to bring in a trope to explain the passage, unless of course that trope helps to clarify the plain meaning one has already established.[651] On the other hand, there are certain passages of Scripture containing tropes that need to be explained clearly lest hearers mistake what seems like the plain meaning for something bordering on blasphemy, as in Genesis 6:7 when God says 'I regret that I made man' (Gen 6:7).[652] Taking these words at face value makes the plain sense of Scripture look ridiculous; in this case one must turn to the other senses of Scripture to explain what God might have meant and dispel ambiguities. No less an authority than Augustine stated that tropes 'merit vigilant attention and memorization because "the knowledge of these is" especially "necessary for resolving the ambiguities of Scripture."'[653] Similarly, certain terms like 'law,' 'flesh,' 'spirit,' 'world'[654] also need careful

* * * * *

649 Book 3 CWE 68 919

650 Book 3 CWE 68 929

651 See book 3 CWE 68 943–52.

652 Gen 6:7 (*poenitet me fecisse hominem*); see book 3 CWE 68 955. See also Augustine *De diversis quaestionibus* LXXXIII (*Miscellany of Eighty-Three Questions*) WSA I-12 LII 65–6: 'The divine scriptures, which have lifted us up from their earthly and human meaning to one that is divine and heavenly, have stooped down to a language that is current even among the most learned . . .' (65). Cf *Ratio* 292–3.

653 Book 3 CWE 68 895 and Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.29.40–1.

654 See book 3 CWE 68 898; cf *Enchiridion* CWE 66 101 where Erasmus makes clear how one should understand the meaning of 'world': 'What we read about the world in ancient theologians has now been made to refer to those who are not monks, according to some men of little learning. The "world" in the Gospel, in the writings of the apostles, Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome is the name given to disbelievers, strangers to the faith, enemies of the cross of Christ, blasphemers against God.'

explanation since they have precise meanings in the Bible that are no longer current in our speech.

A typical, and perhaps the most striking, example in *Ecclesiastes* of Erasmus' method of allegorical exegesis is his elaboration in book 1 of the passage in Exodus 28 where the sacred author dwells on the divine directives for the liturgical vestments and other paraphernalia of the high priest Aaron.[655] Erasmus constructs his allegorical reading of this passage on Jerome's interpretation, extracting from the biblical text's myriad details a spiritual interpretation about the exacting standard of living required of the preacher of the New Law.[656] He affirms that this lengthy and otherwise wearying account, when read spiritually, reveals 'the endowments of the preacher in the priest Aaron' and 'offers us a picture to teach the spiritual priest of the New Testament that he should far surpass the ordinary person in all the adornments of the mind, purity of heart, chastity of body, sanctity of character, learning, wisdom, but above all eloquence worthy of the divine mysteries.'[657] In this respect Erasmus' pursuit of the spiritual meaning of the text is wholly traditional; in fact he manifests some reluctance in proffering new allegorical readings of Scripture, preferring to rely instead on interpretations of the church Fathers, especially those considered safe and widely accepted in Christian tradition. Aaron's vestments, like Scripture itself, 'reveal the interior ornaments of the spirit';[658] Scripture's words make known how it pleases God that we reform our lives in his image. The allegorical and tropological (spiritual) interpretation tells us far more than the dry exposition of Aaron's liturgical garb, and it illustrates the godliness we are called to embrace.

Erasmus proposes that preachers learn these rules thoroughly, almost by second nature, to avoid twisting Scripture's genuine meaning, which often happens if one tries to support the teachings of the faith with proof texts, especially when fighting heresies.[659] If he is fond of repeating one admonition, it is that the preacher should 'shun the emotion of those who

* * * * *

655 Book 1 301–20, 371–2. See Exodus 28 and 29; cf *Ratio* 261.
656 Book 1 314; see also Jerome Ep 64 (to Fabiola).
657 Book 1 302; cf *Moria* CWE 27 137, 140.
658 Book 1 310
659 See book 3 CWE 68 914, 916. See *Ratio* 287: 'And in fact hardly any one among the ancients does not at some point twist Scripture as often as he battles an opponent, and even Jerome himself does this, which he almost acknowledges in one place.' See also 288–91. Erasmus gives examples of Jerome's tendentious interpretations below.

lord it over Scripture, grabbing it by the neck and twisting it to the meaning that they themselves bring to it,'[660] thereby accommodating it to their own personal feelings and agenda, 'a detestable impiety' that Christ's spirit does not forgive.[661] Twisting Scripture characterizes the heretic's exegesis, which is ultimately grounded in stubbornness and wickedness. Nonetheless, even well meaning, though sometimes overzealous, Fathers erred in this respect, falling prey to tendentious interpretations, as he illustrates with examples from Jerome's *Letter to Ageruchia* (Letter 123), where in pursuing his own agenda Jerome attempts to dissuade the woman from remarriage by his rendering of Jeremiah 3:3 ('You have made your own the face of a whore, you are shameless.').[662] Erasmus chides Jerome: 'What effrontery does it take then to twist such a cruel insult against a Christian woman who is engaged in lawful conduct, persevering in holy religion?'[663] Again, Erasmus censures Jerome's twisted use of 2 Timothy 2:20 in the same *Letter to Ageruchia*, where both text and context refer clearly to troublesome heretics of the church as wooden and earthen vessels:[664] 'How is it right, then, to compare a woman who marries twice to a chamber pot?'[665] But Jerome in 'his zeal for chastity' misappropriates Timothy's text and context for his own purposes, and his error can be observed in his departure from other church Fathers' allegorizations. Similarly Erasmus reviles those who do this for their own glory, or out of laziness or disregard for Scripture itself.[666] The guiding rule should be that 'it is more desirable never to depart from the genuine meaning of the Scriptures'[667] and that 'we must

* * * * *

660 See book 3 CWE 68 898 and book 1 372 ('Those who twist Scripture to human desires are lying . . .'); book 3 CWE 68 898, 949: 'to grab Scripture by the neck and force it to the remotest possible meaning.'

661 Book 3 CWE 68 900; cf Matt 12:32. See *Ratio* 284–7.

662 Erasmus follows Jerome's rendering of Jer 3:3 (*Facies meretricis facta est tibi, impudorata es tu*) in Ep 123:9. The Vulgate gives *Frons mulieris meretricis facta est tibi noluisti erubescere*.

663 Book 3 CWE 68 925. Erasmus refers to this woman as Gerontia, but Jerome gives her name as Ageruchia. Jerome also uses this rendering of Jer 3:3 Ep 22 and in his commentary on the minor prophets (*Commentarii in prophetas minores*) *In Osee* 1. See Jerome *Epistulae* CSEL 54 161. For background on Erasmus' views of widowhood, remarriage, sexuality, and the married and single states of Christian life, which obviously vary considerably with those of Jerome, see *De vidua christiana* CWE 66 177–257.

664 See book 3 CWE 68 926.

665 Book 3 CWE 68 926; cf *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 43.

666 Book 3 CWE 68 898

667 See book 3 CWE 68 930.

ensure in good faith, so far as can be accomplished by human effort, that our interpretation does as little violence and causes as little distortion as possible.'[668] The fundamental step in the method is establishing first the accurate and genuine meaning of the text by going beyond the narrow confines of the pericope, returning to the sources, studying the passage in its original language and context, noting what comes before and what follows.[669]

To handle the more recondite passages of Scripture, Erasmus advises preachers to consult the many commentaries of the ancient Christian authorities, comparing (*collatio*) their interpretation of passages with one another, and to take context into consideration as well as times and persons.[670] Because the church Fathers themselves often struggled with these same difficult passages, Erasmus advises preachers to consult their commentaries to understand how they read the passage and how they sought to resolve their difficulties with the text. If the Fathers shed no light, then the preacher should dwell at length upon the passage, praying in faith that God give light.[671] If it comes, the preacher should be careful not to grow proud or obstinate with his spiritual insight;[672] and if this new light is something he believes might benefit others, he should first refer the matter to the bishop to determine if it is consistent with the church's teaching.[673]

* * * * *

668 Book 3 CWE 68 919. See also *Ratio* 287 and *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 123.

669 Book 3 CWE 68 912: 'But in order to apply Scripture appositely and to the point, a preacher does not consider it enough to pluck snippets from collections or indices but must go to the sources themselves and search out the genuine meaning of Scripture from what precedes and what follows.' For this method, see also *Ratio* 285–6, and 292: 'Quandoquidem haec non Origeni tantum, sed et Augustino optima ratio est interpretandi divinas litteras, si locum obscurum ex aliorum locorum collatione reddamus illustrem et mysticam scripturam mystica, sacra sacram exponat.' Cf Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.28.39.

670 Book 3 CWE 68 983, where Erasmus treats allegories and their interpretation. He gives the reader no practical hint as to the editions he might consult, though by this time he had published numerous *opera* of the Fathers. He does not mention the *Glossa ordinaria*, though it was much in circulation, and in Erasmus' lifetime editions of it were printed at Strassburg (1480–1), Venice (1495), Basel (1498, 1502, 1508), Lyon (1520, 1528–29). See Lesley Smith *The* Glossa Ordinaria: *The Making of a Medieval Bible Commentary* (Leiden 2009) 241 and 187–91. Cf *Ratio* 295.

671 A good illustration of this method in practice is Erasmus' *In psalmum 2* CWE 63 65–146.

672 See book 3 CWE 68 1001.

673 Erasmus might here be referring to *Inter multiplices* (4 May 1515) of the Fifth Lateran Council, which, among its other provisions, mandated that bishops or

One premise of Erasmus' exegetical instructions is that the teachers of the early church had a greater grasp on the revealed truth of Christ and the teachings of the apostles because they stood closer in time to them than the 'moderns' and so understood God's message with an immediacy that was later blurred at times or even lost over the centuries.[674] In selecting the ancient authorities as guides, Erasmus prefers those who stood nearest to the time of the apostles, when the gospel was still fresh.[675] By the same logic Erasmus gives precedence to the Greek Fathers over the Latins, for 'the nation has always excelled in fertile intellects,'[676] and the more ancient of them – Clement, Papias, Ignatius, Justin, Irenaeus, Origen, (and Tertullian among the Latins) – stood closer in time and in language to the apostles themselves.[677] Their light guided the next generations of outstanding interpreters – among the Greeks, Athanasius, Basil, Chrysostom, and Cyril;[678] among the Latins, Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine. Among these writers ('middle antiquity'), however, Erasmus assigns first place here to Augustine rather than Jerome 'on the grounds that he has given considerable assistance to the

* * * * *

their delegates examine 'any book or other writing of whatever kind' before its publication. Upon approval, a book would receive an *imprimatur* (*per eorum manu propria subscriptionem*). See Tanner I 632–3; Stupperich 351.

674 See also *Ratio* 211.

675 See book 3 CWE 68 912; cf *Ratio* 211: 'Nec fortassis absurdum fuerit in sacris quoque voluminibus ordinem auctoritatis aliquem constituere, id quod facere non est veritus Augustinus. Nam primae debentur iis libris, de quibus nunquam fuit addubitatum a veteribus. Apud me certe plus habet ponderis Isaias quam Iudith aut Esther, plus evangelium Matthaei quam Apocalypsis inscripta Ioanni, plus epistolae Pauli ad Romanos et Corinthios quam epistola scripta ad Hebraeos. Proximum his locum tenent quaedam nobis ceu per manus tradita, vel ab ipsis apostolis ad nos usque profecta vel ab iis certe, qui vicini fuerunt temporibus apostolorum. Quo in numero cum primis pono symbolum in concilio Nicaeno, ni fallor, editum, quod vulgo dicitur apostolorum . . .' This 'nostalgia for former times, for the golden age of the earliest Christianity,' according to Augustijn, appears first in *Moria*; see Augustijn *Erasmus* 63, and *Ratio* 284–5.

676 Book 3 CWE 68 912

677 Erasmus' preference is regularly for those authors who stood closest to Christ and the apostles; see eg *Ratio* 211.

678 Erasmus also refers at times to the commentary of the eleventh-century Bulgarian bishop Theophylact whose works he admired, although by the time he wrote *Ecclesiastes* he no longer believed him to be an early Greek commentator. See *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 225 n181. See also Augustijn *Erasmus* 97; and *Ratio* 271, where he refers to Theophylact's comment on Matt 26:45. See 'Theophylact' ODCC 1607.

schools of theology with his definitions.'[679] But the Fathers also often give different interpretations and sometimes even disagree among themselves as to the meaning of a passage in Scripture.[680] In such cases Erasmus advises readers to select 'the one that seems to come closest to the true meaning' and 'follow what seems to be more correct.'[681] It should be a guiding principle that Scripture itself is so rich in spiritual meanings that 'there never will be a lack of material for the devout application of scholars to pore over and dig out, provided always that the dogmas of the Catholic faith remain unshaken.'[682] But in using commentaries of the ancients, he counsels discrimination,[683] that one be mindful that the Fathers themselves were not without mistakes and occasional tendentious interpretations.[684]

Erasmus also advises preachers to approach the ancient commentators reverently and 'with greater forbearance than the more recent ones.'[685] Because, historically, doctrines often took ages to be clarified and then pronounced, he observes that in earlier ages the church 'had not yet pronounced explicitly on many topics, and it was not impious to hold doubts so long as it was done in such a spirit that the mistake or doubt would be put aside once the truth was revealed.'[686] Similarly, the preacher should have freedom to review what the ancients had written to see if perchance 'a truer and more genuine meaning of Scripture can be found,'[687] rather than being bound fast

* * * * *

679 Book 3 CWE 68 913. But see his letter to Johann Maier von Eck, Ep 844:132–291; also Tracy (1) 72. Erasmus refrains here from sharp comparisons made earlier between Jerome and Augustine; but see eg Erasmus' comparison of Jerome with Augustine in *Vita Hieronymi* CWE 61 54: 'The facts themselves proclaim that Jerome surpassed Augustine in dialectics no less than he outstripped him in eloquence and that he was no less Augustine's superior in learning than he was in excellence of style.' Cf *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 48, where he speaks of Augustine as 'the most intellectually able and careful of all the Fathers . . .'

680 Book 3 CWE 68 913; cf *Ratio* 292 and *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 42–52, 121.

681 See book 3 CWE 68 964 and 913.

682 Book 3 CWE 68 913

683 See book 3 CWE 68 912–13. In *Ratio* 205 Erasmus cites Augustine's counsel that the books of other celebrated authors be read 'not with the necessity of believing but with the liberty of discerning' the truth of what they say.

684 See above for the instances of this in the exegeses of Jerome and Ambrose. See *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 42–54 especially 53: 'Not even the most distinguished men have been able to avoid committing occasional errors and no amount of circumspection has enabled them to escape the backbiting of their critics.' See also 53 n207.

685 Book 3 CWE 68 912; cf *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 42–53.

686 Book 3 CWE 68 912–13

687 See book 3 CWE 68 913; cf *Ratio* 215.

to the opinions of the ancients who not only often disagreed with one another but also were inconsistent in their own works.[688] The Holy Spirit, after all, does not cease to pour his light on those who prayerfully seek to understand the word of God. Moreover, as the Fathers themselves never insisted on the orthodoxy of their own opinions, so they would have concurred that later generations should also seek out other meanings of Scripture that might still lie hidden.[689]

As a further principle, Erasmus counsels readers to believe that Scripture is so perfectly consistent with itself that if we compare passages with one another the meaning of the pericope in question can often be drawn out.[690] However, when this and every other interpretative method fails, one should approach Scripture with the attitude of Augustine, who sometimes humbly confesses his bewilderment when he cannot understand a passage's meaning.[691] This approach Erasmus himself follows when confronted with passages that continue to puzzle him, such as 'The kingdom of heaven is suffering violence, and violent men are seizing it' (Matt 11:12), or Moses' command at Deuteronomy 22:10 'forbidding anyone ploughing with an ox and an ass' together.[692] One should also be of the same mind when approaching certain passages of the Old Testament that even seem to detract from the majesty of its author, such as God's command 'to destroy so many nations by killing and to shun them with everlasting hatred.'[693] In such instances, one should be like Paul who followed Christ's method of explaining these locutions as types and opening up their meanings with allegories. Yet even employing an allegory or a trope sometimes does not help to explain what Scripture is saying, and at times even the ancients failed badly in trying to do so. So we should also believe like Augustine that 'it was useful for the

* * * * *

688 Book 3 CWE 68 913

689 See Cornelis Augustijn 'Hyperaspistes 1: La doctrine d'Erasme et de Luther sur la "Claritas Scripturae"' in *Colloquia Erasmiana Turonensia* 2 vols (Paris 1972) II 737–48.

690 See book 4 CWE 68 1040: 'The New Testament is harmonious with the Old, and the whole of Scripture is so consistent with itself in all respects that there is never any conflict anywhere so long as it is understood correctly – something that is found in no human philosophy.' Cf *Hyperaspistes* CWE 77 749: 'Nothing could be more self-consistent than Scripture.' See too *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 188 and n150. Erasmus emphasizes this point in *Ratio* 209–11, 292; see also book 4 CWE 68 1039.

691 Book 3 CWE 68 914

692 Book 3 CWE 68 1000. Erasmus has a comment on Matt 11:12 in *De puritate tabernaculi* CWE 65 242–3.

693 Book 3 CWE 68 918–19; cf Num 21; Deut 3:1–7 and 7; Josh 10.

mysteries of heavenly philosophy to be veiled from the wicked.'[694] In instances where the meaning of Scripture still remains obscure, as in Ezekiel's words about the wheels and the dimensions of the temple (Ezekiel 40), it is best simply to confess our inability to grasp the passage's spiritual meaning, holding all the while in our hearts that there is a meaning, though God has not yet granted us the light of spiritual understanding.[695]

To aid readers in biblical interpretation, Erasmus offers additional advice on evaluating the ancient commentators' exegeses. He points out for example that in the past the Canticle of Canticles (Song of Solomon) was read spiritually as 'an allegory of Christ as groom and the church as bride.'[696] But the ages distorted this reading, adding a further interpretation that 'wrenched this [interpretation] to apply [the bride] to the most holy Virgin,' which runs 'contrary to the interpretation of all the ancients.'[697] So he advises the preacher to return to the interpretations of the early church Fathers, to prefer them to the more recent commentators' elaborations.[698] Still, this is not always the best solution, for sometimes even the Fathers erred in giving themselves some licence to twist the words of Scripture to their subject, especially when fighting heretics or exhorting to perfection.[699] Erasmus' hermeneutical approach offers a middle ground (*sobria mediocritas*): first ascertain the literal meaning of Scripture; if deeper senses suggest themselves, look at the interpretations of the Fathers; when their readings do not conflict, then one rests on solid ground; if they differ, one should prefer wherever possible those commanding greatest authority and consensus. And when the Fathers give no reading of the passage, one may proceed as long as one's own interpretation does not depart from solid doctrine and the sense is congruent with the words of the sacred text and 'seems to come closest to the true meaning.'[700]

* * * * *

694 See book 3 CWE 68 962; cf *De doctrina christiana* 2.6.7. See also *Ratio* 259–60.

695 Book 3 CWE 68 961

696 Book 3 CWE 68 919. For the exegetical history of *The Song of Songs* in the Middle Ages, see E. Ann Matter *The Voice of My Beloved:The Song of Songs in Western Christianity* (Philadelphia c 1990).

697 Book 3 CWE 68 920. See *Virginis et martyris comparatio* CWE 69 153–82 where in his devotional treatise to the Benedictine nuns of the convent of the Maccabees in Cologne Erasmus follows the traditional interpretation that he upholds here (CWE 69 164), but he also extends it to the virgins of the convent whose disposition 'thirsts after nothing but the glory of your Bridegroom' (159).

698 See also *Ratio* 283.

699 See book 3 CWE 68 914, 916.

700 Book 3 CWE 68 964

While writing *Ecclesiastes*, Erasmus found himself engaged in a two-front battle against what he saw as the extreme literalists and the incorrigible allegorizers, those on the one side who rigidly adhered to the 'literal,' 'grammatical' reading of Scripture, and those on the other side who saw everything written in Scripture as allegory.[701] Both extremes, he maintains, are problematic and can produce disastrous interpretative results. Referring to the first group, Erasmus declares that 'there is no lack today of people who walk with their loins girded because the Lord tells his people to have their loins girded.'[702] He calls these interpreters 'anthropomorphites' (attributing to God the physical characteristics of a human being) who read Scripture literally without extracting the spiritual meaning. This excessively literalist approach he labels as Judaism: 'People tend towards Judaism when they exclude tropes and allegories from the Scriptures, making a carnal law out of the Law that according to Paul is spiritual.'[703] Erasmus contends that literalism's effect suppresses the inner warmth and fire of Christ's teachings and his offer of universal salvation by making everything depend on an inflexible fidelity to blind ceremonies and to a strictly literal reading of the text. On the other hand, there are the allegorizers who 'reject the lowest [ie literal] meaning when no necessity so compels.'[704] Erasmus censures Origen for this in sometimes allegorizing too freely, noting that the result of excessive allegorizing can lead to a kind of free-for-all; without firm grounding in the text, whatever suggests itself becomes the foundation of the exegesis, which in turn can lead to unwarranted theological conclusions. With this also lurks the danger of misrepresenting the literal meaning of the scriptural text because of the sympathy and zeal of some commentators to exculpate certain biblical persons' behaviour. For this fault Erasmus reproaches Ambrose – 'a great light of the church, in whom nothing should be criticized unless it serves the instruction of

* * * * *

701 On these extremes in Erasmus' day see Kathy Eden 'Erasmian Hermeneutics: The Road to *sola scriptura*' in her *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition* (New Haven and London 1997) 64–78, especially 73–8.

702 See book 3 CWE 68 940.

703 Book 3 CWE 68 943. For other comments on 'Judaism,' see *Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas* LB IX 889D–E, *Ratio* 200, and *De esu carnium* ASD IX-1 22. See also *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 222 n157; Augustijn *Erasmus* 80–1; and especially Dominic Baker-Smith's review and analysis of Erasmus' attitude towards Judaism in his introduction to CWE 63 xlix–lvi.

704 Book 3 CWE 68 943; see also *Ratio* 280, where Erasmus singles out Origen, Ambrose, and Hilary: 'Sometimes when there is no need they do away with the grammatical sense in their zeal to impose an allegory.'

preachers'[705] – for labouring to exculpate Peter after he denied Christ three times in the courtyard of the high priest Caiphas. However noble Ambrose's intention, his manipulation of the Johannine pericope was improper. Allegories and other readings based on the spiritual senses of Scripture must first find warrant in the literal sense, and it is a fault of those who do not understand tropes as used in the literal sense to have recourse to allegories.[706] These examples, of course, are merely cautionary. Erasmus urges preachers to learn how to use allegories expertly, as they are an exceedingly useful means of teaching –'truth that shines through an allegory delights us more'[707] – and when applied appositely yield much fruit. But he cautions as well against their overuse; they should instead be 'sprinkled like seasonings,' as Augustine suggests, for too much 'would easily become repugnant if served as foods.'[708]

To navigate the extremes of biblical interpretation Erasmus counsels 'a sober moderation.'[709] One should first accept the lowest level, the plain meaning of the text; often one needs to go no further than this. It is often on the plain meaning that we are called to dwell in many of the gospel narratives; therein lie riches enough to satisfy the heart. But at times Scripture is obscure and begs us to seek a deeper spiritual meaning. Erasmus observes that the historical account in Numbers 20 of Moses striking the rock is in itself not objectionable for pious consideration,[710] but often the possibly greater spiritual benefit one might bring one's listeners urges the preacher to probe for a deeper spiritual understanding.[711] There is also the practical benefit because allegories 'have considerable value for rousing the weary, for consoling the downcast, for instilling courage in the wavering, for

* * * * *

705 Book 3 CWE 68 943–4. Note Erasmus' harsh criticism of Ambrose's strained exegesis of Matt 26:69–75, Mark 14:66–72, Luke 22:54–62, and John 18:15–27, where Ambrose relates Peter's reaction to those in the court of the high priest 'in order either to excuse or to diminish the apostle's crime.' See also *Ratio* 278–80, where Erasmus notes he is 'sometimes excessive' (*immodicus esse nonnumquam*) (278); Jerome also chastises Ambrose. Erasmus notes that Origen, on the other hand, gives a much more responsible interpretation; see book 3 CWE 68 948, *Ratio* 278–80 and *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 43–4 and 44 n163.

706 Book 3 CWE 68 961–2; Erasmus notes that failing to understand tropes such as hyperbole can lead one to reject the literal sense and resort to allegorizing.

707 Book 3 CWE 68 962

708 Book 3 CWE 68 965

709 Book 3 CWE 68 952. See also Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 143–4 and passim. Erasmus gives the same counsel in *Ratio* 280.

710 Num 20:7–13; Exod 17:5–7

711 See book 3 CWE 68 953, 959, and book 4 CWE 68 1034.

attracting the hypercritical.'[712] Yet, like Augustine, Erasmus urges preachers, when expounding obscure passages of Scripture, to strive above all for the clarity that produces spiritual understanding that leads to the reform of life and the pursuit of godliness.[713] Likewise they should beware of those who shun the lowest meaning; such 'subvert the foundation and strength of Scripture, for they make it a matter of opinion, with the result that it is now human rather than divine.'[714] Certainly it should be far from any preacher to introduce contrived allegorical interpretations for fictitious dreams and things false because he knows they bring pleasure to his listeners. Allegorizing is for the spiritual benefit of the congregation, not one's renown as a theologian. In the end it is better to admit one does not know the meaning of a passage than introduce nonsense, to stick with the Scriptures rather than 'contriving allegorical interpretations from things that are obviously false,'[715] for then 'what is left except for the preacher in the pulpit to relate and interpret his own dreams!'[716] If handling allegory is acquired slowly, tropology, on the other hand, in the sense of finding ethical teaching in passages of Scripture, is entirely different; this type of moral teaching is abundant, although it too needs to be well understood. Erasmus contends that these kinds of tropes abound so greatly in Scripture that there is never not a place for tropology;[717] and it fits his understanding of the Pauline passage that 'all Scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice' (2 Tim 3:16).

Concluding his instruction on allegory, Erasmus declares that its use all comes down to the judgment of the preacher, which is difficult to teach, for it is a habit that comes with training and experience, one that almost by second nature recognizes how the matter of Scripture can be useful for teaching, moving hearts, and giving delight to one's listeners. The skill is acquired over time, and as Quintilian noted of judgment, it 'can no more be imparted by a manual than the sense of taste or smell, for all this proceeds from nature and from an understanding of the matters at hand.'[718] It is in

* * * * *

712 Book 3 CWE 68 961
713 See also Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.8.22.
714 Book 3 CWE 68 943
715 Book 3 CWE 68 951
716 Book 3 CWE 68 952; cf *Ratio* 282.
717 Book 3 CWE 68 968; see also the introduction to CWE 63 xliv for tropology as 'the dominant preoccupation throughout Erasmus' treatment of the Psalms . . .'
718 Book 3 CWE 68 passim. See Quintilian 6.5.1: '. . . personally I regard it [judgment, *iudicium*] as so inextricably blent with and involved in every portion of this work, that its influence extends even to single sentences or words, and it

essence this *prudentia dicendi*, which consists of *iudicium* and *consilium*, that sets apart the outstanding orator.

Finally, to deal with the most common difficulties in interpreting scriptural passages, Erasmus lays out a series of additional hermeneutical principles drawn from the Fathers and his own experience with the sacred texts. He cautions readers that even some biblical texts used in the liturgy of the hours for centuries are wrongly translated and need correction.[719] To avoid problems posed by defective readings, he urges preachers to consult the more correct editions of the biblical text, insist on correct translations, become acquainted with the idioms of the biblical languages, and know the historical circumstances of antiquity, so they can resolve various linguistic ambiguities (especially in the biblical languages).[720] Similarly preachers should know who the persons and places are that are often referred to by two or more names; they should observe scrupulously punctuation and pronunciation,[721] reject 'every statement that conflicts with the inviolable dogmas of the faith,'[722] understand chronological inconsistencies and duplicate narratives, learn how to harmonize apparent contradictions, explain seeming trivialities and absurdities. Above all, they should acquire facility in speaking about Christ in his divine and human natures and what we may predicate of each separately and together.

To augment these principles, Erasmus includes the seven 'Rules of Tyconius,'[723] which Augustine sets forth in book 3 of *De doctrina christiana*. The rules consist of methods for resolving common problems that arise in Scripture's *dicta* on Christ and his mystical body (which is the church), on the twofold body of Christ, on the promises and the Law, genus and species, grace through faith without works, the church, on the quantity of times and numbers, recapitulation (where Scripture returns to a subject it had left off), the devil and his body – topics Erasmus revisits in book 4.[724] Erasmus also repeats much of Augustine's teaching from *De utilitate credendi* (*On the*

* * * * *

is no more possible to teach it than it is to instruct the powers of taste and smell.'

719 See book 3 CWE 68 973.

720 Book 3 CWE 68 895 and passim; cf *Ratio* 266–72.

721 See book 3 CWE 68 895–9. See *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* CWE 71 46: 'The whole sense of a passage often turns on the way one single syllable is written.'

722 Book 3 CWE 68 980–1

723 Book 3 CWE 68 993. Tyconius was a Donatist lay theologian; see 'Tyconius' in *Augustine* 853–5.

724 On Erasmus' use of Tyconius' rules, see Chomarat 'Introduction' 17 and Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 58.

Usefulness of Believing) on the fourfold interpretation of Scripture (literal, aetiological, analogical, allegorical).[725] The sum of *Ecclesiastes'* extensive instruction on methods for handling the literary and historical complexities of Scripture, exegetical traditions, and theological doctrine amounts to what one might rightly consider as the most advanced formulation of biblical hermeneutical principles to date. It is not just the mature product of Erasmus' many years in biblical and patristic studies but the harvest of a fertile field cultivated long ago by Origen, Jerome, Augustine and other church Fathers and enriched by biblical humanists from Lorenzo Valla down to the many scholars of Erasmus' own time.

In concluding his instructions on handling Scripture, Erasmus urges readers above all to approach Scripture devoutly. They should take up God's word with the same pious assumption Augustine expresses about the eternal value, veracity, and wholesomeness of Sacred Scripture: that we 'love the holy books before we learn them and be utterly convinced that there is nothing in them either false or trivial or written by a human mind but that, whatever appearance it displays, everything is full of the heavenly philosophy and worthy of the Holy Spirit if it is understood as it ought to be, and then to read the whole body of Scripture carefully with this in mind and to render it familiar by prolonged reflection.'[726] It should be each individual's conviction that the divine works are inspired by God and are his words spoken to us; they are not ours to suit our own agenda. If we do at times eek out some small new understanding that seems consistent with Scripture and the consensus of the ancients, we should lay it before those in authority so we know our interpretation is in harmony with the dogmas of the church and understood in the way the church believes. As Erasmus says of his comments at one point on the nature of the Trinity: 'I should like this said on the understanding that it was not said should the church not approve.'[727] With additional words and examples on judgment and counsel, Erasmus concludes his exposition of exegetical methods, having covered the last parcels of the vast campus of the preacher's proper instruction. To these three books of his grand treatise Erasmus now adds a fourth and somewhat

* * * * *

725 See this treatise in WSA 1-8 105–48 *De utilitate credendi* (*The Advantage of Believing*).

726 Book 3 CWE 68 1001; see Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 1.35.39–1.40.44.

727 Book 2 CWE 68 693. Erasmus' comment follows his discussion of Augustine's handling of John 17:3, which he sees done in a manipulative way in refuting the Arians.

hastily composed inventory (*inventio*) of the doctrinal content of sermons, which he calls a *sylva*, a kind of rough outline of topics for the preacher.[728]

In September 1524, Erasmus wrote to bishop John Fisher that he could not avoid addressing several doctrines of the theologians in his forthcoming treatise on preaching.[729] Perhaps his idea then was to approximate his colloquy 'An Examination Concerning the Faith' (*Inquisitio de fide*, 1524).[730] Whatever his intention then, sometime towards 1535, in bringing *Ecclesiastes* to a close, he gives it as his purpose to provide 'a list or index of the subjects with which the preacher is especially concerned'[731] (God, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, distinction of persons, God becoming known, the angels, vices and virtues); these he places within the grand framework of salvation history, from the rebellion of the angels, to the incarnation of Christ the teacher, and finally to the Last Judgment when the work of redemption shall have been completed. In providing these topics, Erasmus echoes many medieval *artes praedicandi*, but goes far beyond them by envisioning an extensive catechetical summa embracing everything that is necessary to know for salvation.[732] His topics recall the great summae of the Middle Ages, like those of Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, and John Duns Scotus, but presented here in a more useful, modest, and digestable form. Perhaps, too, Erasmus had at one time anticipated giving preachers theological instruction in a kind of expanded catechism like the one he published with Froben in 1533, *Explanatio symboli* (*A Plain and Devout Explanation of the Apostles' Creed, the Precepts of the Decalogue, and the Lord's Prayer*).[733] Although book 4

* * * * *

728 See book 4 CWE 68 1055–6.

729 Ep 1489:369: 'But in a theoretical treatment of preaching I am obliged to point out some mistakes made by certain preachers and to touch on several of the theologians' favourite doctrines.'

730 CWE 39 419–47; see also Craig R. Thompson's other edition of this work with an extensive commentary: *Inquisitio de fide: A Colloquy by Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus, 1524* Yale Studies in Religion 15 (New Haven 1950).

731 See book 4 CWE 68 1022. Erasmus does much the same in *De copia* CWE 24 635–48, especially 636, where he explains how one is to assemble 'an ample supply of examples' ('Assembling illustrative material'), which he arranges 'according to similars and opposites.'

732 See book 4 CWE 68 1040, 1042.

733 *Dilucida et pia explanatio Symboli quod apostolorum dicitur, decalogi praeceptorum, et dominicae precationis* (*Explanatio symboli*). For Erasmus' catechism within the context of early sixteenth-century catechesis, see John O'Malley's introduction to CWE 70 xx–xxvi, where he notes that after its initial enthusiastic reception, it 'began to sink almost into oblivion' (xxi), and Erasmus also suffered greatly

does not replicate the dialogic form of his catechism, it explicitly addresses the doctrinal and moral teachings to be expounded by the preacher-bishop, in accordance with Paul's words to Timothy that 'all Scripture is useful for teaching . . .,'[734] by taking up the Apostles' Creed and the Decalogue, and to some extent the Lord's Prayer (which Erasmus' catechism dealt with only cursorily), though without going into the articles in too much detail.[735] The arrangement of book 4, which also recalls some of the 'Rules of Tyconius' discussed in book 3,[736] presents the philosophy of Christ within the cosmic framework of divine law, the virtues, and their adversaries, the vices.

At some point early into book 4, Erasmus must have registered how exhausting it would be to cover all the theological subjects he envisioned treating comprehensively,[737] and there was no need to go further. After giving examples on how a list might be assembled, Erasmus leaves the task to the studious reader who after thorough private preparation and the systematic study of Scripture and doctrine would now be called to preach. Certainly Erasmus realized as well that, if he did not put an end to his writing, the book would far exceed the *vastum opus* it had become. Contemporary letters show, too, how ill and depressed he was. Still, he had done all he needed to do. His doctrinal teaching in book 4 had taken his readers to the heart of his philosophy of Christ and his teaching on godliness, and it expressed perhaps more comprehensively than any other work his unique theological vision whose ultimate hallmarks are godliness, order, tranquillity, peace, and concord (*pax et concordia*).

Believing that 'a fairly secure knowledge of the articles of the faith' is required both for one's spiritual life and eternal salvation,[738] Erasmus sees

* * * * *

from his many critics of the work, particularly Luther. See Luther *Tischreden* (Weimar 1921) III 3795, IV 4899. See also J.N. Bakhuizen van den Brink, introduction to *Explanatio symboli apostolorum* ASD V-1 177–200.

734 2 Tim 3:16: 'All Scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice . . .' Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia q 1 a 1.

735 Book 2 CWE 68 683 where Erasmus speaks of 'expounding in a sustained and continuous presentation some such theme as the Decalogue or the Apostles' Creed (*Symbolum apostolorum*),' topics comprising the core of the preacher's teaching, the matter necessary to know for salvation.

736 See book 3 CWE 68 993; see also Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.30.42–3.37.55.

737 Charles Béné believes that in book 4 'Erasmus sensed his own limits'; Béné *Érasme* 375: 'Erasme a senti ses propres limites.'

738 *certior cognitio articulorum fidei* book 2 CWE 68 639. For the importance of dogma and its correct apprehension in Erasmus' theology, see Vogel. In his *Symbolum*

it as each Christian's duty to know these teachings in a way commensurate with his or her natural intelligence and earthly circumstances. Such an understanding lay at the heart of the medieval preaching tradition from the time of Lateran IV (1215).[739] And eleven years after the publication of *Ecclesiastes* the Council of Trent would propose for itself the same ambition – perhaps even taking Erasmus' lead and inspiration – in its instruction to draw up a catechism on the 'necessary matters for salvation' (*res necessariae ad salutem*).[740] And the Roman Catechism of 1566, which was mandated by the tridentine decrees, would become the basic manual for Catholic preachers on 'the matters one needed to know for salvation.'[741]

Erasmus begins his presentation of the essential matters of the faith by returning to the vision of an orderly cosmos, society, and church that opened up book 1. Now, however, he widens his focus to consider the vast spiritual panorama consisting of God, his angels and the devil, and the visible world comprised of the church militant and human society, all seen in the light of salvation history. It will be the task of the preacher to 'consider first that there is according to [Pseudo-] Dionysius[742] a threefold hierarchy, the heavenly [composed of the angels and of the faithful departed], the ecclesiastical [the mystical body of Christ of the church

* * * * *

or Catechism, *Inquisitio de fide*, *Antibarbari*, *Enchiridion*, *Ratio*, and *Paraclesis*, Erasmus earlier articulated what de Vogel calls 'formal principles of theology' or 'foundations' that are necessary for Christians to believe; see especially 114–5. De Vogel seems to have given only cursory attention to *Ecclesiastes* in his discussion of Erasmus and church dogma; otherwise he would certainly have seen the treatise as strongly supporting his thesis.

739 See Wenzel 'Preaching' 163.

740 See Tanner II 669: 'teaching . . . what it is necessary for all to know with a view to salvation . . . [*docendo ea, quae scire omnibus necessarium est ad salutem*]'; see also McGinness *Right Thinking* 30.

741 See *The Catechism of the Council of Trent Published by Command of Pope Pius the Fifth* trans J. Donovan (New York n d); see McGinness *Right Thinking* 37, 93.

742 Dionysius (Pseudo-Dionysius, the Areopagite, c 500) was believed to have followed St Paul after hearing his speech to the men of Athens on the Areopagus (Acts 17:16–34) and to have composed numerous works on mystical theology found in the *Corpus Areopagiticum* (or *Corpus Dionysiacum*): *De coelesti hierarchia* (*On Celestial Hierarchy*), *De ecclesiastica hierarchia* (*On Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*), *De divinis nominibus* (*On the Divine Names*), *De mystica theologia* (*Mystical Theology*). His works would have been available to Erasmus, such as the translation of Dionysius' *Opera* by Ambrogio Traversari, edited by Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (Paris: Johann Higman and Wolfgang Hopyl 1498–99). On hierarchy in Erasmus, see Rummel *Erasmus* 54–7. See also Pseudo-Dionysius *The Celestial Hierarchies* and Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names*.

militant],[743] and the political [the public state of a city or region] . . .'[744] To these Erasmus adds two more hierarchies: 'the monarchical [by which God as king and lord of all drives and guides the universe] and the spiritual [particular to each person].' Though 'presiding in all the hierarchies, but not in the same way,'[745] God stands at their centre as the incomprehensible, eternal, all-knowing, all-present being – 'that highest monarch, the creator, preserver, and governor of all'; 'he alone truly is.'[746] Having made known these cosmic hierarchies, the preacher will then convey an accurate understanding of the nature of God, to whom everything is to be referred: how he acts in nature, which is the mirror of his mind, and at times performs miracles by changing the 'ordinary course of nature';[747] and how Sacred Scripture can attribute to him 'eyes, ears, hands, arms' and ascribe the human emotions of 'anger, hatred, regret.'[748] Above all, the preacher will declare that God's 'ineffable majesty . . . is believed through faith rather than understood': 'One understands by believing, interprets by worshipping.'[749] And in so far as he is able, he will speak about the Trinitarian nature of God, the distinction of persons, what is proper to each, how God presides through different agencies in the various hierarchies, and how all these hierarchies in some degree reflect the heavenly hierarchy, 'in which there is perfect order and perfect concord.'[750] He will relate further how in the heavenly hierarchy the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exist in perfect unity, which is what the members of the body of Christ are, joined as far as possible in faith and charity, and drawn into the oneness of the Trinity – 'an example of perfect concord.'[751]

Of paramount importance in Erasmus' theological vision is order. God's original design of perfect concord ended the moment of the first great sin with the rebellion of the angels, when this cosmos split into two

* * * * *

743 Erasmus understands this 'in two ways: this word either embraces only the living and true members of Christ destined for blessed immortality that are known to God alone, or else for the whole congregation of those living in the communion of the sacraments of the church, which includes and tolerates the evil mingled with the good' (book 4 CWE 68 1023).

744 Book 4 CWE 68 1022–3; cf Erasmus' prefatory letter to the 1518 edition of *Enchiridion* CWE 66 14–6; see also McConica 'Grammar of Consent.'

745 See book 4 CWE 68 1027; cf Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names*.

746 Book 4 CWE 68 1025

747 Book 4 CWE 68 1025

748 Book 4 CWE 68 1026

749 Book 4 CWE 68 1026. The author of this quotation is unknown.

750 Book 4 CWE 68 1028

751 Book 4 CWE 68 1029; see also Kleinhans 93–106 for a discussion of Erasmus' understanding of the Trinity.

great warring parties. Opposed to God's design stands his antithesis and antagonist, the tyrant Satan, Prince of Darkness.[752] And yet God dominates the cosmos absolutely while using Satan's malice 'for exercising the chosen and punishing the impious.'[753] Satan, who was created in goodness by God, by his own volition turned against his maker; as antagonist he now seeks to corrupt all that God has made and redeemed, turning the virtuous from the promise of heavenly life, persuading human beings to vices, sin, and bondage. Perversely, 'though he is one, he nevertheless reflects the three divine persons.'[754] With his impious demons, Satan in his 'supreme malice to lead astray and disturb good order'[755] seeks at every point to subvert the work of Christ, pitting his minions to work against Christ's angels, inciting rebellion in all the created hierarchies. As the great destroyer and seducer, 'he dissolves and scatters everything that he can.'[756]

At the heart of Erasmus' theology of our redemption and vision of cosmic hierarchical order lies God's eternal law,[757] 'than which nothing is more just, nothing more holy, nothing more beneficial.'[758] Conveying the importance of our knowledge of this law for every well-run polity therefore becomes paramount, and a knowledge of its importance for our eternal life indispensable. The preacher therefore must know how to explain the term 'law,' whose meanings in Scripture are various, as it can sometimes refer to the precepts of the Decalogue or to both Old and New Testaments; but in every instance God's law is 'always the same' though 'displayed in a variety of ways taking account of differences in times and persons.'[759] For in each epoch God dealt with humankind differently: at creation he spoke directly to Adam, commanding him not to eat of the tree of good and evil;

* * * * *

752 Book 4 CWE 68 1029; cf *De puritate tabernaculi* CWE 65 233.
753 Book 4 CWE 68 1029
754 Book 4 CWE 68 1029
755 Book 4 CWE 68 1030
756 Book 4 CWE 68 1030; see Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 2.23.36: 'The society of demons is to be feared and avoided, since they seek to do nothing under their leader the Devil but to block and cut off our return homeward.'
757 See book 4 CWE 68 1030 and passim. The Council of Trent (Session 24, Canon 4) will emphasize this part of the bishop-preacher's teaching: 'Bishops are to announce the sacred scripture and the law of God in their own church . . .' (Tanner II 763). For a broader understanding of the role of law in society at this time, see Gerald Strauss *Law, Resistance, and the State: The Opposition to Roman Law in Reformation Germany* (Princeton 1986).
758 Book 4 CWE 68 1030
759 See book 4 CWE 68 1031. For the idea of law in Erasmus, see C. Douglas McCullough 'The Concept of Law in the Thought of Erasmus' ERSY 1 (1981) 89–112.

after his banishment he inscribed an understanding of this law in nature to guide humankind in the knowledge of what was right and wrong; later he gave the written law to Moses to clarify and reinforce that law of nature;[760] and finally with humankind's redemption in Christ, 'the Law of the gospel was given in order to grant salvation through faith and grace.'[761] Under the New Law the *miles Christi* fights beneath the standard of Christ in the hope of everlasting triumph. In each instance God makes known how one should pursue godliness, but at the same time in each epoch human wickedness, prompted by Satan, seeks to break the restraints of the Law and turn to impiety. To thwart God's design, Satan established his own law 'in diametrical opposition to the divine laws. This is the law of the flesh; sin is its attendant, death its wages.'[762]

Erasmus' presentation of law stands in conscious opposition to the antinomian sentiments of Luther and of some other Reformers that the Law's only purpose was to reveal that humankind's weakness rendered it incapable of observance, and that the person justified through faith in Christ had no need of the Law and was free from its observance.[763] Erasmus rejects every notion that the Law has been abolished, maintaining that the preacher must make clear who the author of these laws is, their ministers, what all these laws looked to, namely Christ, 'the power [*vigor*] and perfection of all the laws,'[764] and how these different expressions of God's law contained various types that foreshadowed Christ, who 'revealed all truth both through himself and through the Holy Spirit.'[765] 'The New Law is both a clarification and a summary of the Old'; in it one finds 'what belongs to the spirit and to grace and renders one truly pious.'[766] Many prescriptions of the Old Law in fact 'pertain to kindness and fairness'[767] and are

* * * * *

760 Book 4 CWE 68 1031–3
761 See book 4 CWE 68 1033.
762 Book 4 CWE 68 1030; see Rom 6:23.
763 Erasmus' words reflect closely his *De libero arbitrio* and *Hyperaspistes* 1 & 2 against Luther's teaching in *De servo arbitrio*; see especially CWE 77 665–7. Cf Luther *Freedom of the Christian Man* LW 349: 'It is clear, then, that a Christian has all that he needs in faith and needs no works to justify him; and if he has no need of works, he has no need of the law; and if he has no need of the law, surely he is free from the law. It is true that "the law is not laid down for the just" [1 Tim 1:9].' For Zwingli's view on the Law, which is close to that of Erasmus, see Augustijn 'Reformation' 41–2.
764 Book 4 CWE 68 1033
765 Book 4 CWE 68 1033
766 Book 4 CWE 68 1036, 1037
767 Book 4 CWE 68 1036

eminently useful still; aspects of these laws support the Christian in his spiritual progress, and through them he comes to know the nature of the Law's precepts and how these should be understood today, as some have been abrogated, others modified, and still others reaffirmed with greater force: 'Those that prescribe rules for morals and piety are eternal; those that prescribe ceremonies have been abrogated according to the letter, they have not been abrogated according to their spiritual meaning.'[768] Erasmus maintains it is important to know that 'what the Lord or the apostles confirmed or changed must be observed as they prescribed.'[769] The preacher also needs to understand the meaning and function of ceremonies ('every external form of worship'),[770] how passages of the Old Law foreshadowed Christ's words and actions, how they give us shining examples of the virtues, and the many loci that arise from considerations of the Old and New Testaments, such as their authority, their authors, harmony, consistency, agreement, testimonies, pronouncements, the unanimous consent of the ages regarding their truth, their power to transform lives, and their fundamental accord with human nature.

Erasmus' considerations on the Law reflect his view of the individual's spiritual progress from impiety to piety, from flesh to spirit, the long progress of the church from the moment when 'charity cooled' in the postapostolic age to its slow but continual advancement in the spirit through the reform of its members over the ages, to the growing spiritual illumination of our minds as we return daily to the sources of Christian wisdom. In each consideration Erasmus posits no radical break from what went before or rejection of the past but sees rather a kind of conservation and sublimation of what had preceded into a more perfected spiritual reality. Consequently, considerations of the Old Law should draw us to appreciate more richly how it reflected and anticipated Christ, the fulfilment and perfection of the Old Law and our New Law (cf Rom 10:4). These spiritual realities further allow us to see more keenly the law of God existing throughout creation from its beginning to its consummation. Indeed, God's law has not been abrogated; rather, its hidden messages and types have been made manifest to

* * * * *

768 Book 4 CWE 68 1034; see book 3 CWE 68 919: 'The Old Law should not be rejected in the least but is holy and good if understood correctly.'

769 Book 4 CWE 68 1035

770 Book 4 CWE 68 1037; as in *Ratio* 252, Erasmus does not reject the church's ceremonies but does 'not approve that on the basis of human regulations nearly the whole life of Christians is burdened with ceremonies; because too much is given to them, very little to piety.'

us by Christ, 'the perfect model . . . of all the virtues,'[771] that we might know it, love it, and more willingly serve him whose eternal wisdom decreed it.

Considerations of the Old Law and the New Law give rise to numerous loci about Scripture – its mysteries, authority, authors, the perfect agreement of Scripture with itself, 'the consensus of so many ages and so many nations,' its efficacy.[772] Erasmus finds yet another locus in 'an examination of the meanings of the Scriptures,' but refers the reader back to book 3. Still further loci arise, such as the meaning of 'sin'[773] and the 'two kinds of death,'[774] which in turn draws him to present the virtues and the vices, starting with the 'heroic virtues' (faith, hope, and charity) and their contraries, to which Erasmus dedicates extended discussion.[775]

Having covered the theological virtues, Erasmus urges readers 'to assemble and arrange by loci a catalogue of all the virtues and vices.'[776] He notes that catalogues of this sort have already been drawn up by prominent theologians like Thomas Aquinas (one of his few references to the work of a 'modern' author),[777] and he encourages readers who cannot undertake

* * * * *

771 Book 4 CWE 68 1039
772 Book 4 CWE 68 1040
773 Book 4 CWE 68 1041
774 See Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 151–6.
775 Book 4 CWE 68 1041–6
776 Book 4 CWE 68 1046. For the idea of *loci communes* and in Aristotelian and Ciceronian traditions and their use by Philippus Melanchthon, see Breen 'The Terms' 197–209. In 1521, Philippus Melanchthon composed *Loci communes rerum theologicarum, seu, Hypotyposes theologicae* (Basel: Adam Petri 1521), a book for preachers that takes up *loci communes*. Breen argues that Melanchthon uses loci as Cicero, not Aristotle, used them (205); and he notes that 'Erasmus [besides seeking to 'reconstitute all knowledge' by the *loci*] . . . sought more particularly to reinterpret Christianity by *loci* belonging to ethics' (202). See also Paul Joachimsen 'Loci Communes: Eine Untersuchung zur Geistesgeschichte des Humanismus und der Reformation' *Luther-Jahrbuch* (Berlin 1926) 27–97. Breen also notes that a small treatise on the topical method appeared in 1531, 1532, 1533 in volumes that also contained Rodolphus Agricola's *De formando studio* and Erasmus' *Ratio colligendi exempla*. See also Quintilian 2.1.9, 11, 2.4.22 and 27; and Hoffmann *Rhetoric* 151–6.
777 See also Ep 858:74: 'Who can carry the *Secunda secundae* of Aquinas round with him? And yet the good life is everybody's business, and Christ wished the way to it to be accessible to all men . . .' See also CWE 66 272 n10: 'The second part of the second book of the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas was often published separately as an authoritative manual of ethics.' For background on the genre of the treatise on vices and virtues, see Richard Newhauser *The Treatise on Vices and Virtues in Latin and the Vernacular* (Turnhout 1993) and

one on their own to make excerpts from them.[778] For each of these virtues a preacher will have a deep well of material from which he may draw lessons; such would include not only the many meanings of these terms but also their contraries, their effects, how they are nourished, those who have displayed these virtues pre-eminently, and those who have not. These lists would provide preachers with reliable loci drawn from the sacred books wherever they speak on matters necessary for salvation. Prominent among the virtues, after faith, hope, and charity, are the cardinal (philosophical or moral) virtues – prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance – to which all *genera* of virtues can be referred. These virtues in turn correlate with the theological virtues; for example, 'prudence corresponds to faith, justice to charity, fortitude to hope; temperance is a species of justice that teaches how much should be assigned to the affections, how much to the body, how much to the mind . . .'[779] Significantly, at this point, just after considering temperance as a species of justice, Erasmus considers the many species of godliness (*pietas*), but without explicitly linking it first with justice. We know however that *pietas* also falls under justice and operates like temperance because after sketching an outline of the 'duties of godliness' he connects the two. At this point Erasmus constructs his locus (or 'compartment' [*nidus*]) for godliness (*pietas*) as a species of commutative and distributive justice.

A consideration of godliness begins at the summit of God's hierarchies. As God is owed our 'highest piety,' Erasmus starts with worship (λάτρια)[780] and its many denotations, as well as the many loci and their contraries that arise from it, such as God's 'charity and generosity towards the human race'[781] and human impiety as manifested in idolatry, 'grumbling in adversity, forgetting God in prosperity, malicious arts, fortune telling, and whatever of this kind has either an obvious or a secret conspiracy with demons,

* * * * *

his edition of essays *In the Garden of Evil: Vices and Culture in the Middle Ages* (Toronto c 2005). See also *De copia* CWE 24 636: 'Each person should draw up a list of virtues and vices to suit himself, whether he looks for his examples in Cicero or Valerius Maximus or Aristotle or St Thomas.'

778 Besides Thomas' *Secunda secundae* Erasmus likely had access to other frequently published works on the subject: eg Gulielmus Peraldus *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus* (Venice: Paganinus de Paganinis 1497) and Jordanus von Quedlinburg *Tractatus virtutum et viciorum* (=*Sermones de tempore 439–441*) (Strasbourg 1483). See Newhauser *The Treatise* (n777 above) 35–6 and the essays *In the Garden of Evil* (n777 above) ed idem, especially Wenzel 'Preaching' passim.

779 Book 4 CWE 68 1047

780 More correctly λατρεία ('service')

781 Book 4 CWE 68 1048

finally heresy.'[782] 'In general, every crime is connected with impiety, for whoever commits a crime is preferring some created thing to its creator and defecting from God to Satan . . .'[783] Erasmus covers extensively all the additional species of godliness (*pietas*), beginning with how much we owe to our homeland, to the Catholic church, to our educators, 'above all those who shape tender minds towards godliness'[784] and those who have saved our lives, especially our spiritual lives by drawing us away from impiety or heresy and leading us to Christ. Such considerations bring us also to consider the demands of Christian charity, which extend even to mortal enemies, as shown us by Christ, especially when he died on the cross 'praying for those by whom he was being killed,'[785] and to all things contrary to these various stages of charity.

To systematize the theological doctrines he has presented Erasmus proposes fourteen headings on matters to be preached (*indicis capita sive titulos*).[786] These headings, beginning with God's nature or essence, he subdivides into parts covering those matters of the faith that each person should know under that entry; under most of these fall various loci. For each of the headings he starts out to provide a collection of pertinent material (*sylva*)[787]

* * * * *

782 See Book 4 CWE 68 1048. Erasmus here and elsewhere expresses his belief that 'malicious arts' (*artes maleficae*) are practised and that persons consort with demons; see also *De immensa Dei misericordia* CWE 70 80–1. For Erasmus on witchcraft and magic, see Chomarat *Grammaire* I 45–8. Heresy he lists in the final position, even worse than witchcraft. For Erasmus' changing attitude on heresy and heretics in the 1520s and 1530s, see Augustijn *Erasmus* 179–81.

783 See book 4 CWE 68 1049.

784 See book 4 CWE 68 1050.

785 See book 4 CWE 68 1051.

786 Book 4 CWE 68 1055

787 *sylva* or *silva*; see the note on this word by J.H. Mozley in *Statius* I: *Silvae-Thebaid I–IV* Loeb Classical Library (London and Cambridge, Mass 1982) xi note a: 'The word means literally "pieces of raw material," from *silva* = Greek ὕλη, *i.e.* pieces ready to be worked up into shape, or impromptu pieces; *cf*. Quintil. x.3.17 "diversum est eorum vitium, qui primum decurrere per materiam stilo quam velocissimo volunt, et sequentes calorem atque impetum ex tempore scribunt; hanc silvam vocant." "Their fault is different, who wish to run over their material first with as rapid a pen as possible, and write impromptu, following the inspiration of the moment: such work they call *silva*." *Cf*. also Aulus Gellius, *Noct. Atti.* Pref. 6.' Erasmus found this method in Jerome's scholarly activities; see *Vita Hieronymi* CWE 61 33: 'And to make his memory more reliable and his application more prompt he would organize whatever he read by topic, sorting all items on the basis of their affinity or their opposition.' See too *Ratio* 291 and the introduction to Angelo Poliziano *Silvae* trans and ed Charles

consisting of 'reasons, confirmations, witnesses, especially those of the Scriptures, types and figures, solutions of questions, parallels, examples, amplifications, epigrams, proverbs, and things like these' that can be used for preaching.[788] It seems however that Erasmus recognized quickly the enormity of the task of constructing a *sylva* for each of these headings; and rather than undertaking the entire project himself, he gives the reader a start by constructing *sylvae* on 'The Nature of God,' 'The Son,' 'The Holy Spirit,' 'The Distinction of Persons,' 'God Becoming Known,' and 'The Angels.' Appreciating the vast extent of this project, and perhaps the value in each one doing the work for himself, he leaves the remainder 'for the zealous to complete, so that each may examine the sacred books, choose for himself what he will judge useful for preaching, and arrange it in a convenient order . . .'[789] Erasmus however provides some further assistance with an example of how a preacher might impose such an order on his material in the right theological sequence that demonstrates God's eternal plan in drawing us from carnality to spirituality by comparing carnal birth and propagation and the symbolic events as taught in the Old Testament (Gen 1:28) with spiritual birth and propagation and the significance of those events as proclaimed by the Gospel (Mark 16:15).[790] But he cuts short his example, making clear its purpose: preachers should 'select things of this sort to have at hand when speaking.'[791] From 'the gardens of the Scriptures' they will draw up lists and their *sylvae*, ready-to-hand topics or commonplaces for liturgical events and extraliturgical gatherings, such as panegyrics of saints, funeral orations, dedications of churches, catechesis, special commemorative moments, and

* * * * *

Fantazzi (Cambridge, Mass 2004) vii–xx, especially xi: 'In the introductory paragraphs to his commentary on Statius' poems, he [Angelo Poliziano] elaborates on the meaning of the word *silva*, which he says denotes *indigesta materia*, a sort of confused raw material that the poet has to re-work. It has the connotation of looseness of structure, a sense of spontaneity and discontinuity. Statius himself had emphasized these qualities in his prefatory letter to the *Sylvae*, using expressions that suggested rapidity of composition and improvisation. But it is a studied, controlled improvisation that is achieved by long labor. The flexible style of the *silva* allows for both epic grandeur and bucolic simplicity, varied stylistic artifice, multiplicity of themes, all seasoned with rare literary erudition.'

788 Book 4 CWE 68 1064; see *De copia* CWE 24 635–48, 672–3, where Erasmus shows the reader how to assemble illustrative materials for writing and speaking; and Grünwald 129–31.

789 Book 4 CWE 68 1090

790 Book 4 CWE 68 1090–1. See Gen 2:7 and John 3:5–6.

791 Book 4 CWE 68 1097

especially occasions for moral exhortations – for 'commending the virtues and execrating the vices' – teaching 'theological dogmas,'[792] and 'observing vigilantly the laws that the mystical books prescribe for human actions . . .'[793] They will draw material not only from Scripture but from the commentaries on Scripture of those 'who by daily study have acquired a deep knowledge of the Scriptures and have won great authority in the church by the holiness of their life and the honesty of their judgments.'[794] Erasmus also advises the preacher to know the decrees of church synods and be familiar with the scholastic disputations that have been properly conducted, namely ones that 'rely especially upon scriptural foundations.'[795] With this, Erasmus refers his reader to the commonplaces, hermeneutical materials, and 'the remarkable occurrences in human life' that he proposed in book 3.[796]

Erasmus concludes *Ecclesiastes* by offering readers an example of how one might construct a *concio* commending concord, 'finished and complete with the entire paraphernalia of oratory.'[797] The approach follows the standard rhetorical divisions of an oration. His exordium sets forth a definition of true concord, and then follows a narration of the facts with definitions, reasonings, distinctions, illustrations, examples, confirmations, concord's author, and archetypal examples of concord, such as the Trinity, Christ in his church, the interassociation of the members of the mystical body of Christ,[798] the joining of male and female, the joining of body and soul, the concord of the heavenly bodies, the elements 'that serve each other in turn in a marvellous harmony,' and 'in brute animals and in their variety.'[799] His many examples of concord in inanimate things, like arrows bound together that resist force and serve to strengthen each other, further confirm the need for concord among human beings. Copious examples offer inventive ways to emphasize God's wondrous design that human beings should emulate the

* * * * *

792 Book 4 CWE 68 1097; see also Vogel. These two items, interestingly, are also the two identified by the Council of Trent in its decree on the reformation of preaching.

793 Book 4 CWE 68 1097; Erasmus often uses the term 'mystical books' for Sacred Scripture.

794 Book 4 CWE 68 1097

795 Book 4 CWE 68 1097

796 Book 4 CWE 68 1097

797 Book 4 CWE 68 1098. See Erasmus *Ratio*, which also concludes with words on avoiding contentions; see also *De concordia* CWE 65 125–216.

798 The symbol of the third and forth archetypes is the *synaxis* in the communion of the body and blood of the Lord. See book 4 CWE 68 1099.

799 Book 4 CWE 68 1100

harmony found not only in the Godhead but in even the lowest elements of creation, where every plant or rock evinces a harmonious dependence on others for survival and growth. These examples should prompt one to ask: If nature displays such a disposition to concord, by how much more should human beings strive for this among themselves, how much greater the benefits to all if people made it their constant duty to live in concord with one another? This argument then refutes the contrary evidence of the disorder in nature and society where Satan sows discord and works to impose his tyranny on the human race. And here one should take hope, for with the advent of Christ and his church, the enclosure separating us from God has been demolished.[800] Christ has made us 'children of God instead of enemies' and checks Satan's designs by re-establishing that primordial concord, seeking in his church 'an entire peaceful kingdom free from every rebellion.'[801] With this, the preacher then will make sure his audience understands what concord truly means by distinguishing the types of concord[802] – 'man with God,' 'man with man,' and 'each man with himself, which is provided by a mind at peace with itself and flesh that obeys the spirit.'[803] The types are so interconnected that they are either all present or all absent: 'No one has peace with himself if there is a tumult of thoughts in his breast accusing or defending each other. No one has peace with God if he has a quarrel with his neighbour.'[804] Erasmus would then have the preacher conclude with passages from Holy Writ and secular writings, selecting especially those 'passages that commend concord to us.'[805]

Erasmus' *concio* and the final passages of *Ecclesiastes* aptly recapitulate his life's teachings and his ideal of the purpose of good and sacred letters (*bonae ac sacrae litterae*). Like true education, preaching should promote the philosophy of Christ, who came to bring peace and concord, not just the kind that reigns in charity among individuals in society but that inner peace that individuals find with themselves, where flesh submits to spirit, and above all that persons find with God in faith and innocence. This, Erasmus contends, is the sum of the Law and the prophets, the essence of the *philosophia Christi*, Christian godliness. True concord generates perfect friendship and

* * * * *

800 See book 4 CWE 68 1101.
801 Book 4 CWE 68 1101
802 Book 4 CWE 68 1102; see also McConica 'Grammar of Consent' 96.
803 Book 4 CWE 68 1102; here Erasmus echoes Thomas Aquinas' teaching on 'peace' and 'concord'; see *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 29 a 1.
804 Book 4 CWE 68 1102; cf Matt 5:23–4.
805 Book 4 CWE 68 1103

harmony and peace among all members of Christ's body, of which there is nothing more in accordance with human nature, nothing more pleasing to God, and no greater sign that the *ecclesia*, Christ in his members, is truly present.[806]

In effect, *Ecclesiastes* gives preachers aspiring to excellence in their office a Christian equivalent of Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* by offering all that is best in classical rhetoric and in the church Fathers to handle Scripture correctly and fruitfully, teach doctrine, and provide moral guidance. At the same time Erasmus hardly touches on the kinds of topics one might expect in the contentious climate of the Reformation; he says very little (but if so, often with a sting) about the theological subjects one regards as characteristic of the medieval church – hell, purgatory, holy images, saints' feast days and festivals, papal indulgences,[807] prayers for the souls of the departed, the Antichrist, and the end of the world. Nor does *Ecclesiastes* even hint that Scripture may be used as a key to interpret contemporary events or to indulge in apocalyptic speculation.[808] Erasmus' words on ceremonies and monks display hardly less restraint when compared, for example, with his *Ratio*,[809] but he is careful to mention why he makes such criticisms. Except for extolling the central importance of baptism, the treatise mentions mostly in passing and without provoking controversy the sacraments of penance, the Eucharist,[810] holy orders, matrimony,[811] and last anointing. It speaks but briefly of the primacy of the Roman pontiff,[812] the invocation of

* * * * *

806 The theme of harmony, concord, peace, and tranquillity runs throughout Erasmus' writings, especially in the final years of his life; see eg *In psalmum* CWE 65.

807 See book 2 CWE 68 701. Cf *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 30–1, where Erasmus calls attention to a preacher who vitiated his sermon by including words 'in commendation of papal indulgences . . .'

808 See book 3 CWE 68 734.

809 See eg book 2 CWE 68 603, 622–3, 630, 635, 668.

810 Erasmus' discreet silence on the Eucharist or Last Supper would have been in keeping at this time with his life in the reformed city of Basel; see Reedijk 59.

811 Cf *Ratio* 207–8, where Erasmus takes issue with many ecclesiastical teachings regarding matrimony, eg that 'matrimony is indissoluble from consent alone'; he finds no scriptural support for the teaching. See also his comments there on contracting marriage. See especially *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 203–438.

812 Cf *Ratio* 197–8, where referring to the Petrine text in Matthew (16:18–19) Erasmus gives the opinion of 'certain [theologians]' (and his own) that Peter's confession of faith 'belongs to the entire body of the Christian people' and not Peter alone; 'Peter responds with the voice and in the place of the entire

saints and angels, and mentions only in passing the virginity of Mary.[813] Marian devotions,[814] the veneration of the saints and angels, liturgical feast days, the divine office, relics, pilgrimages, the rosary and other sacramentals, monastic vows, virginity, and celibacy are given minimal mention, if at all. Nor does the treatise give us much of an idea how the *concio* might be integrated with the Eucharistic liturgy, though the treatise strongly suggests that it is principally at mass that the preacher's discourse takes place.[815] We might assume too that Erasmus took it as given that the bishop's preaching occurs both within and outside the liturgy, as St Paul insists (2 Tim 4:2); but still we hear scarcely anything about those times 'in season and out of season.' Erasmus' focus falls almost entirely on the spiritual disposition and message of the preacher, who must assess the circumstances for speaking and measure his words appropriately. Nor does he want the preacher to go into the minutiae of specific theological doctrines; rather he should set them out plainly, extracting their spiritual relevance and adding no 'more ... than it is necessary to believe,'[816] as he once noted to Simon Pistoris.

From the time Erasmus first conceived the writing of *Ecclesiastes* until its completion in August 1535, the Reformation advanced on a fateful course, often with uncivil results, many of which Erasmus viewed firsthand at Basel and which affected him personally, so causing him to depart

* * * * *

Christian people: "You are Christ, the son of the living God; for there is no one in the body of Christ from whom that confession is not demanded ..."' (198). Cf *Ratio* 206.

813 But see Erasmus' *Modus orandi Deum* CWE 70 141–230, especially 187–8, where it is clear Erasmus understands 'the perpetual virginity of Mary' as a dogma of the faith for the reason that 'it has been handed down to us by the consensus of early orthodox writers,' even though 'this is not a teaching based on clear scriptural testimony ...' (187). See also *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 231–387, especially 289–93; and Vogel 118. Erasmus does not mention the theological question of the immaculate conception of Mary.

814 Erasmus makes a few references to the Virgin Mary; for his views on the cult of Mary, see L.-E. Halkin 'La Mariologie d'Erasme' ARG 68 (1977) 32–54.

815 See book 2 CWE 68 565 where Erasmus says, 'Let the greatest part of the sermon nevertheless be given over to the Gospel and the Epistle.' See O'Malley 'Sacred Rhetoric' 22.

816 Ep 1744:68–9, where he objects to those 'who push more doctrine down our throats than it is necessary to believe.' See also the prefatory letter to his edition of St Hilary (Ep 1334:253): 'This indeed is the mark of theological learning: to define nothing beyond what is recorded in Holy Scripture, but to dispense in good faith what is there recorded.'

for Freiburg im Breisgau on 13 April 1529.[817] In the years leading up to 1529 Erasmus had many dealings with individuals directly involved in the Reformation. Against his advice, his friend Johann Froben (d 1527) published Luther's works at Basel in 1518 and 1519, and Melanchthon's school companion, Johannes Oecolampadius, who assisted Erasmus at the Froben press with his 1516 edition of the Greek New Testament (*Novum instrumentum*), became a leading Reformer at Basel after 1522, where he emerged as the 'first Protestant preacher in the minster, the first head preacher (*antistes*) of the Basel reformed church.'[818] Erasmus' close proximity to the Reformation movement at Basel and his pleas for *concordia*, like his controversies with the Reformers, no doubt registered a deep impact on him; but he did not use his treatise to carry on controversies or settle theological questions. Nonetheless, certain passages do underscore Erasmus' final position vis-à-vis the various doctrines advanced by some Reformers, and they suggest a deliberate distancing of the author especially from Luther and his hostility towards the church of Rome.[819] Though Erasmus never mentions in this treatise the name of anyone associated with the Reformation,[820] it is hard not to imagine that behind some of his comments on preachers and their doctrines he is not merely calling to mind but stating his disagreements *sotto voce* with Martin Luther, Philippus Melanchthon, Guillaume Farel, Otto Brunfels, Huldrych

* * * * *

817 See Augustijn 'Reformation'; Reedijk 34.

818 Thompson 'Return'; Erasmus did not subscribe to Oecolampadius' views on the Eucharist, as he made known to the town council of Basel; see Ep 1636:343–4; and Reedijk 36–7. See also Myron P. Gilmore 'Erasmus and the Cause of Christian Humanism: The Last Years 1529–1536' in his *Humanists and Jurists* (Cambridge, Mass 1963) 115–45; see also Augustijn *Erasmus* 173–83, and his 'Reformation' 38–9.

819 For Erasmus' even sharper differences from Luther's position not only on grace and free will but on basic theological issues such as Christology, which develop after their controversy, see Bengt Hägglund 'Erasmus und die Reformation' in *Erasmus und Europa* Wolfenbütteler Abhandlungen zur Renaissanceforschung 7, ed August Buck (Wiesbaden 1988) 139–47. Hägglund supports his argument on Manfred Hoffmann's *Erkenntnis und Verwirklichung der wahren Theologie nach Erasmus von Rotterdam* (Tübingen 1972), which considers Erasmus' Christology as 'a dualistic theory of accommodation,' meaning that the divine and human natures of Christ are 'unbridgeable. God and man in fact cannot become one' (Hägglund 143).

820 Erasmus ends his *Compendium vitae* commenting on 'the sad business of Luther'; CWE 4 410: 'The sad business of Luther had brought him a burden of intolerable ill will; he was torn in pieces by both sides, while aiming zealously at what was best for both.'

Zwingli, and others. Though touching on disputed theological questions but briefly, he affirms his own positions on justification by faith, faith and works, grace and free will, the Law and grace, how salvation occurs,[821] and how best to frame these teachings in *conciones.* Erasmus, for example might concur with Reformers that one is justified by faith, but he states emphatically that one who is justified must pursue good works, a position he finds solidly supported in the examples of the apostles and in the life of the early church.[822] Against the Reformers who teach that 'all our works are evil,'[823] he staunchly upholds the importance of good works, while affirming that piety consists in 'abandoning trust in human works, especially those that do not proceed from faith and charity.'[824] Without good works there could be no true religious reform of the church, and society would languish in immorality, believing everything has been predetermined by divine necessity. Horrible it would be if preachers disseminated the idea that because of our faith we are free of the Law and may do as we please.[825] Erasmus insists that religious rituals be performed, but preachers should emphasize at the same time the spiritual significance of these ceremonial actions. While Reformers assert that satisfaction is not necessary for sins committed, Erasmus underscores the importance of sacramental confession and 'satisfaction' (or

* * * * *

821 See eg book 3 CWE 68 585, 635, 955, 994–5, 1019, 1020–1 (faith and good works). Erasmus echoes the words from his *De concordia* CWE 65 201–3.

822 See book 3 CWE 68 995: 'Here the reader of the holy books ought to be careful and alert so that, when he sees that works are demanded, he does not judge that he can fulfil the instruction by his own strength, or that, when he reads that those who are of the faith are free from the Law, he is not obligated by any commandments of the Scriptures. The Law, which lights the way, shows what must be done, what avoided; grace allows us to have the ability to produce what we are commanded.' Cf *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 32, 49, and *De puritate tabernaculi* CWE 65 245–7 and n124.

823 Cf *Hyperaspistes* 2 CWE 76 284–5, where Erasmus takes issue with Karlstadt and Luther.

824 Book 3 CWE 68 1020. Perhaps what Erasmus would put more precisely here is what he expressed in his *De libero arbitrio* CWE 76 77: 'But when I hear people maintain that all human merit is so worthless that all human works, even those of godly men, are sins; when they claim that our will does no more than clay in the potter's hands, or attribute everything we do or will to absolute necessity, then I become exceedingly uneasy.' See also *Hyperaspistes* 2 CWE 77 746–7. For a concise analysis of the differences between Erasmus and Luther, see Augustijn *Erasmus* 135–45.

825 For the differences between Zwingli and Luther in their theology of the Law (and Erasmus' affinity with Zwingli on this question), see Augustijn 'Reformation' 41–2.

'compensation') as a vital part of it,[826] maintaining that one should not be permitted to sin with impunity but should feel motivated to make up for the crime out of love for God, who both avenges wicked deeds and forgives us our sins.[827]

Despite clear disagreements with the Reformers, Erasmus' words, on the other hand, can sometimes suggest a sympathy with them and a reaching out for open and honest dialogue. His remark on Hilary of Poitiers' comment, 'For faith alone justifies,' in reference to Matthew 9:6[828] prompts Erasmus to exclaim: 'And yet this statement, which is heard with reverence in Hilary, has been subjected to a long clamorous outcry in our age.'[829] In context this phrase is perfectly acceptable, but, to his dismay, his critics seemed ever prone to overlook context and make the words themselves touchstones of orthodoxy or heresy. Erasmus labours to make clear how his position on this doctrine differs from those who distort it by claiming, 'There is no righteousness from our works, and the nature of our works does not matter so long as we believe that Christ is our righteousness.'[830] It seemed tragic to him that learned men, Roman Catholic and Protestant alike, would be incapable of admitting their own limitations and fail to see Scripture and Christian tradition in its wider, complex historical development as an ongoing process of theological interpretation within the living community of believers, closing off honest scholarly exchanges, quickly denouncing one other as heretics because of certain words while missing the sincerity of each person's effort to express a belief, not working for that consensus of minds and hearts that is so vital for the life of the church.[831] It weighed heavily upon him that the time had passed when cooler minds 'might do the truth in charity' and 'in all things grow up in him who is the

* * * * *

826 See *Exomologesis* and Michael Heath's introduction above passim. In *Ratio* Erasmus shows greater willingness to express his opinion on the matter of confession than he shows here; see 205–6, where he criticizes those who teach as dogma its institution by Christ, not by the apostles.

827 See book 3 CWE 68 1021; cf book 2 CWE 68 610.

828 See book 3 CWE 68 967; cf Rom 4:5, 5:1; see Hilary of Poitiers *In Matthaeum* 21.15 SC 258 140–1: 'quia fides sola iustificat.' See also Erasmus' letter to Jean de Carondelet (preface to the edition of St Hilary), Ep 1334:969–70, which ends with a plea for reasoned, charitable restraint in theological discussion: 'Let the absence of furious contention, the bane of peace and concord, prevail everywhere.'

829 See book 3 CWE 68 967.

830 See book 3 CWE 68 1020.

831 See book 3 CWE 68 1016.

head, into Christ' (Eph 4:15). Ironically, among his generation of biblical humanists there were indeed a great many areas of unanimous agreement, but few it seemed worked for consensus; the majority insisted uncompromisingly on the unassailable correctness of their teachings. On the importance of instructing worthy preachers as heralds of God's word, for example, Erasmus would have found the Reformers in full accord with him; there was no debate either on the primary importance of preaching God's word or of Jesus' command to 'teach all nations' (Matt 28:19) as foremost among the duties entrusted to apostles and their delegates. Yet throughout the writing of *Ecclesiastes* we sense Erasmus viewing his contemporaries as bitterly fixated on theological questions, with each person unyielding in his insistence on having the truth, all the while missing the simplicity of Christ's teaching and example. Their intransigence would gravel him to the end of his life.

By 1534, the disruptive atmosphere of reformation Basel had largely subsided, and in the late spring or early summer of 1535 Erasmus returned there to see a few old friends and be close to the Froben press for the publication of *Ecclesiastes* and his edition of Origen's *Opera*.[832] We should surely assume that Erasmus' views of the Reformers' ideas or his own views did not change with his move, for he tells Conradus Goclenius of Louvain on 28 June 1536, in the last of his surviving letters, 'For although I am among the truest of friends here, which I did not have at Freiburg, nonetheless because of the dissension over dogma I'd prefer to end my life elsewhere. Would that Brabant were nearer.'[833] Erasmus never got his wish. He died in Basel close to midnight between 11 and 12 July 1536, having at last finished what would be the most influential work on sacred oratory after St Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*, and arguably the most important treatise of his life.

FJM

* * * * *

832 Erasmus did not live to see the publication of Origen's works; in September 1536, two months after Erasmus' death, Beatus Rhenanus finished the edition, added a preface, and published it with Hieronymus Froben and Nicolaus Episcopius; see *Origenis Adamantii eximii scripturarum interpretis Opera* 2 vols (Basel: Froben 1536).

833 Allen Ep 3130:26–9. For his difficult theological conversations with others at this time, see Reedijk 59–62. See also Allen's footnote for Erasmus' letter to Louis de Vers (Basel, 7 October 1535), Allen Ep 3062.

This page intentionally left blank

Translator's Note

For the text of *Ecclesiastes*, Erasmus' last and longest work, we are largely dependent upon the *editio princeps* (Basel 1535), its list of *errata*, prepared by Erasmus himself, and the corrections subsequently incorporated (whether or not at Erasmus' direction) in the two further editions issued in 1536 and the two issued in 1540, after the author's death. For a substantial portion of book 1, however, we have the additional authority of an autograph manuscript, G.K.S. 95 of the Danish Royal Library in Copenhagen. The editor is thus challenged chiefly in the portion of the text for which we have the conflicting authority of an autograph and a first edition; elsewhere there is little to do other than to identify possible errors, deciding whether they derive from Erasmus or from the printer, and whether they should be corrected or not. In the present version, book 1 was initially translated from the Leiden edition of 1706; then the translation was brought into conformity with the text of Jacques Chomarat[1] when it became available, and the remaining books were all translated directly from Chomarat; his copious annotations have often been consulted with profit.

While I have, in general, followed Chomarat's text, I have sometimes chosen to translate something other than what he has printed, and I have sometimes rejected his interpretation of the Latin; in revising the translation, I have also taken account of Nesselrath's reviews of the edition.[2] The disagreements with Chomarat's text or interpretations are indicated *ad locum* in notes to the translation: in some instances I reject his construction of the Latin to follow another; in some I reject an emendation he proposes; in some I propose (or even translate) my own suggested emendations; in some

* * * * *

1 ASD V-4, V-5

2 Heinz-Günther Nesselrath, review of ASD V-4 *Gnomon* 66 no 3 (1994) 221–7; and his review of ASD V-5 *Gnomon* 70 no 4 (1998) 313–7.

I repunctuate, an area where earlier editions are (by modern standards) particularly unreliable.

Once matters of the text have been settled, the translator must also decide how to translate, and must deploy the strategies that will best convey to Latinless readers what it is like to read Erasmus' original Latin.

Naturally the stylistic affections that are most prominently in evidence here need to be preserved. One of these is the use of plural subjects with singular verbs, sometimes because the subject is naturally compound or forms a hendiadys, sometimes because Erasmus simply strings a series of new subjects after the first one. Another is his fondness for asyndeton, which has been preserved wherever this can be done without creating some intolerable ambiguity in the English; this seems all the more appropriate given that Erasmus himself in book 3 commends asyndeton as a stylistic device to impart a certain ardour to language.

The broad range of Erasmus' vocabulary must be represented as well. Sometimes this requires the choice of word that is slightly exotic from the point of view of 'normal' Golden Age or Silver Age Latin prose (Erasmus of course was no strict Ciceronian – he is closer to Suetonius or Gellius – and in any case he did not write exclusively in a single style or stylistic register); again, examples have been indicated in the notes.

I have also tried to respect the stylistic register of Erasmus' vocabulary. For example, his preferred verb for expressing the idea of having relations with prostitutes is *scortari*. This is derived from *scortum*, originally 'skin,' a cruder term for 'prostitute' than the euphemistic *meretrix* 'wage earner,' and so the English verb 'to whore' seems the appropriate equivalent (especially since the OED notes that the noun 'whore' is 'confined to coarse and abusive speech': Erasmus uses the verb when attacking the men who engage in such activity). Erasmus also uses a variety of unflattering designations for 'ordinary people' or 'the common man.' They may be an ignorant mob, the common muck, or worse; no effort has been made to soften these terms. Erasmus' gift for satirical invective should be indulged wherever possible.

Very few concessions have been made to the concept of 'politically correct' or 'inclusive' language. Sometimes, where the context certainly warranted it, I have translated *homines* as 'people' or 'persons,' *filii* as 'children' rather than 'sons.' But these instances are outnumbered by those in which *homines* has been translated as 'men' or 'mankind'; to do so otherwise would be a betrayal of Erasmus. Equally, no attempt has been made to soften the language which Erasmus applies to Jews, however astonishing it may be to find someone saying, only a few decades after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, that it is only thanks to Christian mercy that Judaism has survived so long.

Just as importantly, I have removed as little as possible of the syntactic awkwardness that sometimes intrudes; these blemishes reflect both the lack of final finishing touches and the very real mental and physical agony in which Erasmus found himself. These are not particularly apparent in books 1 and 4, which are fairly accomplished compositions, the former consistently eloquent and elevated, the latter a series of lists and headings followed by a few examples. Books 2 and 3, on the other hand, are simply a mess. There is a nightmarish welter of cross-referencing, as Erasmus constantly postpones topics for later discussion or resumes discussions interrupted earlier (or promises to). There is more syntactical irregularity here than elsewhere, to such an extent that one readily imagines Erasmus not only reluctant but even afraid to plunge in again and tidy up the confusion. Sentence fragments are commonplace here, as are errors in sequence of tenses. I have sought to preserve such errors in order to reflect the inchoate state in which Erasmus seems to have left these books.

JB

TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE AND MOST REVEREND PRELATE, CHRISTOPH VON STADION, BISHOP OF AUGSBURG, FROM ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM, GREETING[1]

Experience has taught me, dear Christoph, glory of the prelates of this age, that it was no empty maxim that the ancient oracles handed down to us when they said: 'Pledge your word, and ruin is close behind.'[2] Several years ago I promised a work on preaching. To tell the truth, I was not serious and did not really mean it. Later, people seriously demanded what I had not seriously promised. So not having the leisure to do what was being asked of me, I began jotting down a few notes at random for future use in case I found the will and the opportunity to tackle the subject. I did not proceed carefully and systematically, but sporadically, as something happened to come to mind. Later, when the demands became even more insistent, I began to collect my notes, which by this time were not just scattered, but torn and musty. When I examined them, my mind recoiled more and more from the project, though even earlier I had always had certain secret misgivings. I realized that the subject was vast and complex and that, if treated with the necessary care, would result in an immense volume. But when the demands continued without end, I put pen to paper against my better judgment, since I did not want anyone to think that I had reneged on a promise. When nothing worked out well, I rejected my first attempts. Time after time and at long intervals I took up the abandoned work to see if my interest could be rekindled. I fixed my mind on the task with chains as strong as those with which Virgil's Aristaeus bound Proteus, but his efforts succeeded and mine did not.[3] I kept hoping in the course of this long procrastination that someone would appear to relieve me of this responsibility, especially when I considered the rich harvest of talent that this age is producing and the great interest in printing new works. When no one appeared who was prepared to take over my role, and every day the numerous appeals, both spoken and written, grew more clamorous– now with an unmistakable undercurrent of reproach– I proceeded, almost against Minerva's will,[4] to put together a draft, which, though rough and disorganized, would prove that I did not lack the will to fulfil my promise, even if my abilities failed to match my intentions.

* * * * *

1 Ep 3036
2 *Adagia* I vi 91
3 Virgil *Georgics* 4.38–452, where Aristaeus binds with chains the wise but slippery Proteus to force him to answer his questions.
4 *Adagia* I i 42 *Invita Minerva* 'Against Minerva's will.'

However, even this I was not permitted to complete without interruptions. First ill health, then other responsibilities intervened to compel me to put aside the work, and it was only with difficulty and after long intervals that I was able to resume what I had begun. This explains what the learned reader will perhaps detect: gaps, repetitions, arguments that are incomplete or out of place. Someone will say, 'Why did you not make a final revision and correct what displeased you?' To be quite frank, I could not face going over such a massive work again, for it was only with difficulty that I accomplished this much with my health growing weaker every day. No one would find it easy to believe how desperately I longed in my soul to put aside these labours and withdraw into a world of peace and calm, and for the rest of my life (and what remains could easily lie in the palm of a small hand or within a closed fist) to speak only to him who cried out long ago and whose voice remains the same today, 'Come unto me all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will refresh you.'[5] For in this troubled, not to say tumultuous age, amid the many vexations that these times inflict on everyone and all the personal problems that come with age and failing health, there is no place where my spirit finds more rest and contentment than in this converse with the divine. When these thoughts occur to me, I feel more confident that the fair-minded reader will treat kindly what I offer now, such as it is. I do not make this appeal to you, most honoured bishop, for I know you are a man of such generosity of spirit that you always turn a blind and friendly eye to the failings of your friend Erasmus, and whenever my powers prove inadequate to the task, take the will for the deed.

I have divided the whole subject into four books. In the first I demonstrate the dignity of the office and what qualities the preacher ought to possess. In the second and third books I apply the principles taught by rhetoricians, dialecticians, and theologians to the practice of preaching. The fourth is a sort of catalogue, showing the preacher what ideas he should look for in Scripture and in what passages he will find them. However, with this I have done no more than point the studious reader in the right direction; otherwise the subject could not be fitted into a single short volume.

This rough sketch (for this is what I would prefer to call it rather than a work in the proper sense of the term) I had almost decided to dedicate to John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, a man of outstanding piety and learning, with whom I had enjoyed a long and close friendship, though I had made no promise to him but merely turned over the possibility silently in my mind.

* * * * *

5 Matt 11:28

He, more than anyone else, encouraged me by letter to take up this task, remarking that in the celebrated University of Cambridge, where he was permanent warden – the title they use is 'chancellor' – he was founding three colleges, which would graduate theologians who were not so much armed for the battles of words (λογομαχίαι) as trained for the sober preaching of the word of God.[6] He himself possessed a special grace of speech, which had long ago endeared him to the paternal grandmother of King Henry, who now rules over England.[7] God had given her a mind far above a woman's. While other princesses generally provide rich legacies for the building of monasteries (doing so, I fear, more out of pride than godliness), she, while she was still alive and in good health, had devoted herself enthusiastically to the holiest cause of all and was so little concerned with the breath of popular favour that her actions were almost kept a secret.[8] In several places, whenever she found men capable of passing on to the people the philosophy of the gospel, she arranged for them to be appointed at a generous salary, and for this same purpose she gave Bishop John a huge sum of money, all of which this most honourable man spent on the training of preachers or on providing comfort for the needy; far from taking anything for himself, he added liberally from his own resources. Here was a noble and saintly woman and a bishop of exemplary godliness, who rightly thought that nothing was more crucial for improving the behaviour of the people than to have qualified preachers to scatter the seed of gospel teaching. How is it that in many hearts Christ languishes or indeed is dead? How is it that so much that is pagan passes under the name of Christ, if not from a dearth of faithful preachers? It seemed to me that even the people of Italy (to say nothing of their princes) could be taught to live a godly life, were it not for a lack of teachers.

But these matters must wait for a more appropriate time. Now to continue what I began, when the bishop of Rochester was taken from me by a painful stroke of fate, it seemed right to me to launch this work, such as it is, under the happy auspices of your name, for your extraordinary compassion, more than anything else, is a consolation to me for the heavy loss of friends. When merchandise is lost in a shipwreck, there is weeping. But

* * * * *

6 'Battles of words'; Erasmus uses the Greek plural λογομαχίαι.

7 Henry VIII (149–1547). Henry VIII's paternal grandmother and the mother of King Henry VII was Margaret Beaufort (c 1441–1509). See Michael K. Jones and Malcolm G. Underwood *The King's Mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (Cambridge and New York 1992) and CEBR I 109–11.

8 'Breath of popular favour'; Horace *Odes* 3.2.19; Virgil *Aeneid* 6.816

is there any merchandise so precious to be compared with a good friend? Could anything be more cruel than this recent tempest that has robbed me of so many distinguished friends: first William Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, then recently William Mountjoy and the bishop of Rochester and Thomas More, who was lord chancellor of his country, a man whose heart was purer than the snow, whose like England had never seen before, nor is likely to see again, and who, in addition to all this, was the father of a remarkably gifted family.[9] For so great a loss two things in particular ease my sorrow: first the reflection that we shall soon be reunited with Christ in a happier world, and secondly the thought of the remarkable band of friends that Augsburg has given me. You are first in rank among these and by far the dearest of my friends, unless the great Johann Paumgartner wants to take up the challenge.[10] Next to him is Anton Fugger, the world of learning's most generous supporter.[11] This is like a threefold rope, which Solomon says is not easily broken.[12] But it becomes stronger still if we add Johann Koler, who, like a fourth strand wound around the other three, makes the combination absolutely indestructible.[13] Your kindness does not of course guarantee that I shall not grieve, but it prevents me from succumbing to my grief. I must pray to God that he will keep safe for me such a precious treasure.

As for my hopes for the work, if it fails to win the approval of the learned world, my example may perhaps inspire some better scholar to accomplish what I wanted to accomplish and to produce not just a rough sketch but a work that is complete in every way, so that at last the Lord will send more true labourers into his harvest.[14] For just as, in the words of that amusing old proverb, 'Many can goad an ox, but few can plough,'[15] so, by the same token, it is easy to train a speaker to address the people but more difficult to find men to spread the word of God sincerely, fervently,

* * * * *

9 For William Warham, see CEBR III 42–31; see also book 1 352–5. For William Blount fourth baron of Montjoy, see CEBR I 154–6. For Thomas More, see CEBR II 456–8. See also John Guy *Thomas More* (London 2000). For Thomas More's family, see John Guy *A Daughter's Love: Thomas More and His Daughter Meg* (Boston 2009).

10 For Johann (II) Paumgartner, see CEBR III 60–1.

11 For Anton Fugger, see CEBR II 6–7.

12 Ecclus 4:12

13 For Johann Koler, see CEBR II 269–70.

14 Luke 10:2; Matt 9:38

15 *Adagia* I vii 9 *Multi qui boves stimulent, pauci aratores* 'Few men can plough, though many ply the goad.'

and faithfully. It is a gift of God that the seed sown by faithful ministers springs up. The world seems to have been in labour with Christ for a long time, but if he were truly formed in our souls, then, by a multitude of signs, the pure root of the heart will be revealed.[16] For the gospel is not just words, nor, as Flaccus says, is a forest merely firewood;[17] but whenever the seed of the living word has been received into good earth, it brings forth abundant fruit and as it grows, offers varied evidence of the inner purity of the mind. The people become more obedient to the government, more respectful of the laws, more desirous of peace, more averse to war. There is more harmony in the home, greater trust and honesty, and a stronger abhorrence of adultery. The husband becomes more gentle towards his wife, the wife more respectful of her husband. Children obey their parents with more trepidation, serfs obey their masters more willingly, domestic servants are more prompt in performing their duties.[18] Craftsmen and employees do their work more conscientiously. Businessmen do to no one what they would not like done to themselves. To sum it up in a word, everyone becomes more eager to serve and slower to take revenge or do an injury, less greedy and more thoughtful. In those whose behaviour does not show these qualities, but rather the opposite, it is to be feared that the good seed has not yet settled in their hearts.

But I must stop preaching so you may have time to read my *Ecclesiastes* if, that is, you will think it worth the attention of your eyes and ears. Farewell.

Basel, 6 August in the 1535th year since the birth of Christ

* * * * *

16 The image 'root of the heart' recalls Rom 11:16: 'And if the root be holy, so are the branches.'

17 Horace *Epistles* 1.6.32: 'Do you think virtue is a mere word and a forest only firewood?'

18 This ideal of family life is based on Col 3:18–23 and Eph 5:21–6:9.

ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM TO THE READER, GREETING

Many authors like to blame their errors on the work of the printers. But here I frankly confess that almost all the errors in this work must be attributed either to my amanuensis or myself. It is true that I was present during the printing, but because of my poor health I was unable to make a final revision, especially since the need to correct certain pages often coincided with the hours that had to be devoted to sleep or to the care of my poor body. There was, however, no need for my help since that task was vigilantly carried out by Sigismundus Gelenius, a man of great learning and taste.[1] But when I had the leisure to read over some of the printed pages, I discovered several places that had slipped through my revision. There is not a huge number of these if you take into consideration the great length of the work, very few, if you discount trivial errors. I thought I should add a note here to this effect.

* * * * *

1 For Sigismundus Gelenius, see CEBR II 84–5.

This page intentionally left blank

ECCLESIASTES, OR THE EVANGELICAL PREACHER BY DESIDERIUS ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM: ON THE DIGNITY, PURITY, WISDOM, AND OTHER VIRTUES OF THE PREACHER[1]

BOOK ONE

Ecclesia means in Greek what *concio*[2] does in Latin, that is, an assembling of the people to hear about state business.[3] Those who convoke a crowd

* * * * *

1 On the frontispiece of the 1535 Froben edition, Erasmus gives the title of his treatise as *Des. Erasmi Rot. Ecclesiastae sive de ratione concionandi libri quatuor, opus recens, nec antehac a quoquam excusum*; just above the opening lines of book 1 he gives as the first book's title *ECCLESIASTES SIVE CONCIONATOR EVANGELICVS* [*ECCLESIASTES, OR THE EVANGELICAL PREACHER*]. To this Erasmus adds the subtitle: *DE DIGNITATE, PVRITATE, PRVDENTIA, CAETERISQVE VIRTVTIBVS ECCLESIASTAE LIBER PRIMVS*. Books 2, 3, and 4 will bear the titles *Ecclesiastae sive de ratione concionandi liber secundus* (*liber tertius*, *liber quartus*).

2 The word *concio* (or *contio*) properly refers to the assembly called by an official to hear about state business. The word takes on the meaning of the address spoken before the assembly. Erasmus purposely elects the classical Latin word *concio* (*contio*) rather than the common alternatives (*sermo*, *oratio*, *predicatio*, *homilia*) to emphasize the public nature of preaching like its secular counterpart, where one 'speaks to an assembly' (*ecclesia* or *concio*) about matters of 'state business.' As Erasmus presents it a few lines below, the preacher (*ecclesiastes*) is above all one who 'expound[s] the edicts, promises, and will of the highest Prince and persuade[s] the general public.' It is important to note as well that Erasmus will substitute *concio* for *ecclesia*; see eg 'Credo sanctam ecclesiam' ('Et te confiteor, sanctissima concio, qua gens / Christigena arcano nexu coit omnis in unum / Corpus & unanimis capiti sociatur Iesu, / Hinc proprium nescit, sed habet communia cuncta.' *Christiani hominis institutum* LB V 1357E–F, quoted by Wilhelm Hentze *Kirche und kirchliche Einheit bei Desiderius Erasmus von Rotterdam* (Paderborn 1974) [2].

3 At Rome the term is used for a meeting called by a priest or a magistrate to hear an issue; *contionem habere* means 'to hold a meeting.' See L&S 451; OLD II 44; and Francisco Pina Polo 'Procedures and Functions of Civil and Military *contiones* in Rome' *Klio* 77 (1995) 203–16. The Greek word *ecclesia* (ἐκκλησία), meaning 'assembly,' was used by the translators of the Septuagint to render the Hebrew word *qāhal*. For meanings of the word *ecclesia*, see *A Greek-English Lexicon*

for trivial matters are called ἀγύρται,[4] vagabonds and itinerant performers; those who do so against the state are termed seditious. Ἐκκλησιάζειν is 'to speak at an assembly,' and ἐκκλησιαστής 'someone who speaks publicly before a crowd';[5] among the pagans too this office was always considered

* * * * *

of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature 4th ed, ed William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago and Cambridge 1963) 240–1. For *ecclesia* and *ecclesiastes* as equivalents of the Hebrew words *qāhāl* and *qōhelet*, as well as the problematic nature of the terms, see Thomas Krüger *Qoheleth: A Commentary* ed Klaus Baltzer (Minneapolis 2004) 41: 'Yet it is not entirely clear in what this consists: "The name Koheleth remains as enigmatic today as ever before." 𝔊 translates קֹהֶלֶת *qōhelet* with ἐκκλησιαστής, "participant in a popular assembly" (Gk. ἐκκλησία Heb. קָהָל *qāhāl*), Jerome with *concionator*, "popular speaker" (cf Luther: "preacher"). Thus there are two directions in which the designation קֹהֶלֶת *qōhelet* from the Hebrew verb קהל *qhl* can be understood: (1) a function that is defined in some way that is over against and in relation to a popular assembly (however it might be more closely defined), or (2) a representation of this popular assembly or its participants themselves (and the two possibilities do not have to be mutually exclusive).' Chomarat notes that in this way the Greek word 'assembly' was Latinized to *ecclesia* to mean 'the church.'

4 'Prop. *collector*, esp. *begging priest* of Cybele' or 'vagabond' (LSJ); the religious association of the former definition may be relevant to some of Erasmus' later denunciations of certain behaviour among the clergy and religious of his day.

5 The book of Ecclesiastes (LXX Ἐκκλησιαστής; Qoheleth, from the Hebrew word *qāhal*) receives its title from the word meaning 'leader of the assembly' or in this case 'teacher of the assembly.' In this work of the Bible the 'Ecclesiastes' identifies himself as having been 'the king of Israel in Jerusalem, who took it to heart wisely to seek out and investigate everything under the sun' (Eccles 1:12). The Hebrew book consists of random topoi or various lessons and sayings for instructing a congregation in religious piety and practical wisdom (eg piety towards God, the vanity of riches, obedience to authorities). The word therefore is most appropriate for Erasmus' work because it captures his conception of the office of the preacher (*concionator*), which is publicly teaching the heavenly philosophy. For Jerome's commentary on the book of Qohelet (Ecclesiastes), see *St. Jerome: Commentary on Ecclesiastes* trans, ed, Richard J. Goodrich and David J.D. Miller, Ancient Christian Writers in Translation 66 (New York; Mahwah, NJ 2012). Jerome employs the term frequently; see *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten* in *S. Hieronymi Presbyteri Opera, Pars 1: Opera Exegetica* CCSL 72 247–361, especially 250 (1.1.1–9): '*Verba Ecclesiastis filii David Regis Ierusalem*. Tribus nominibus vocatum fuisse Salomonem scripturae manifestissime docent: pacificum, id est Salomonem; et Ididia, hoc est dilectum Domini; et quod nunc dicitur Coeleth, id est Ecclesiasten. Ecclesiastes autem graeco sermone appellatur, qui coetum, id est ecclesiam, congreget, quem nos nuncupare possumus concionatorem, quod loquatur ad populum, et sermo eius non specialiter ad unum, sed ad universos generaliter dirigatur.'

especially lofty and honourable.[6] But just as there are two kinds of government, the secular (which some prefer to call the 'extrinsic' on the grounds that among Christians consecrated to God nothing should be secular) and the sacred (which today they call the ecclesiastical), so there are two kinds of *ecclesiastes*:[7] the secular, who proclaim the laws of princes and decrees of magistrates and persuade the people; and the sacred, who expound the edicts, promises, and will of the highest Prince[8] and persuade the people at large. Their functions, though differing in name, in no way conflict with each other; rather each serves the other, and they have the identical aim of ensuring that the state is peaceful and tranquil and that its tranquillity is dedicated not to pleasures and to luxury but to Christian devotion.[9] All Christians ought to bear this aim in mind above all in every action, both private and public. It is useless for a city to be safe against enemies, floods, or plague if its citizens' hearts are stained and disturbed by base desires.[10] No other kind of civil war is more deadly than when a man is at odds with himself. Likewise, having peace with your neighbours is useless if you are

* * * * *

6 See Quintilian 3.8.1.23–8: 'If I had to find a single object for them, I should have preferred Cicero's view that the essential feature of this type of theme is dignity [*dignitas*]. Not that I doubt that those who hold the former opinion also held the idealistic view that nothing that is not honourable [*honestum*] can be expedient [*utile*] either.' See Cicero *De oratore* 2.82.334 and *De finibus* 2.14.45.

7 In the course of the introduction to book 1, I retain *ecclesiastes* as long as Erasmus plays upon the sense of the word; otherwise it is simply 'preacher.' (J. Butrica)

8 In drawing parallels between secular and sacred 'government' (*politeia*), Erasmus will commonly use the language of the former in reference to affairs of the latter (eg 'edicts, promises, and will of the highest Prince'). In the church 'the highest prince,' Chomarat notes, refers to Christ, not the pope (ASD V-4 37 16n): Christ is also spoken of as 'the highest ecclesiastes.' In the state, 'the first and highest ecclesiastes is the king or prince'; in the sacred sphere, *ecclesiastes* is the bishop, who lawfully delegates this office to his pastors and others.

9 Erasmus articulates his idea of a constitution of the Christian republic, of secular and sacred realms, each independent in its own right, not conflicting but mutually serving each other, sharing the common aim of 'ensuring that the state be peaceful and tranquil' in accord with Christian devotion. Book 1 makes clear how infinitely exalted the 'sacred' is over the 'secular'; acknowledging this is a fundamental step in training the preacher.

10 Here Erasmus anticipates his vision at the end of book 4 of society at peace, where these 'base desires' have been eliminated and Christians dwell in peace and concord.

at war with God. Yet, just as physical condition and health frequently impede the pursuit of godliness, so external calamities of the state frequently hinder the discipline of religion and import a grievous moral plague: such are wars or the invasions of barbarian tribes.

Of the 'external' state, therefore, the first and highest *ecclesiastes* is the king or prince,[11] each in his own dominion, and under him governors, deputies, and magistrates; of the 'sacred' it is the bishop,[12] and under him pastors or others lawfully delegated to perform this office. We observe, however, that here too, as in many other matters, the business is handled wrong way round. No one rushes forward rashly to make a secular address about state business, nor is just anyone admitted to the platform; rather, out of the boundless mass of men, someone suitable is chosen, and whoever undertakes the task of speaking carefully studies the case about which he is going to speak to ensure that nothing is uttered that conflicts with the will of the prince or is not conducive to the good of the state. But persons of every sort – the young, the irresponsible, the ignorant – are admitted, sometimes even leap up, to make sacred orations, as though nothing were easier than to expound divine Scripture to the people, and as though it were quite enough to wipe away the blushes of shame and set the tongue rolling. The source of this problem is the failure to consider how great is the dignity and the difficulty and the utility of the ecclesiastical orator if he performs his duty correctly.[13] Therefore, desiring with the help of Christ's spirit to train the priestly *ecclesiastes*, we shall take our beginning from this point.

Many and varied are the gifts that divine goodness, in its eagerness for our salvation, has provided to the human race to obtain eternal life, but none among these is more splendid or more effective than to dispense the Lord's

* * * * *

11 Erasmus echoes the book of Ecclesiastes (1:1, 12) where 'the teacher' states he was 'the son of David, king of Jerusalem.'

12 The bishop is above all the teacher and therefore the most important agent in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, a point Erasmus repeatedly emphasizes.

13 Erasmus dedicates much of the first book to the theme of the 'dignity of the preacher.' The theme itself has a long history in homiletic literature. Erasmus, however, addresses it in a novel way by elaborating on contemporary abuses in the pulpit, contrasting these with the exalted office that preaching is divinely designed to be. He wastes no time excoriating deplorable preaching practices. His contrasts make the simple point that, if secular addresses in assemblies before kings are given such meticulous attention, those in sacred assemblies deserve immeasurably more. Erasmus' critique of preaching and preachers has a long history; see eg *Moria* CWE 27 132–5; *Ciceronianus* CWE 28 384–5; and *Colloquia* (*Concio, sive Merdardus*) CWE 40 938–62.

own word to his flock; and there is no other office in the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy either more outstanding in worth or more difficult to perform or more fruitful in application than to act as a herald of the divine will to the people and as a steward of heavenly philosophy.

Accordingly, that highest *ecclesiastes*, the Son of God, who is the most perfect image of the Father,[14] who is the eternal power and wisdom of his begetter,[15] through whom the Father decided to bestow on humankind whatever good he had determined to grant the race of mortals, is never named more splendidly or more meaningfully in Holy Writ than when he is called the Word or Speech of God.[16] This title, which can be shared with no creature, belongs specifically to his divine nature since the word 'Christ' and 'Jesus' is more in keeping with the human nature that he assumed; for the name of Jesus he has in common with many, and 'anointing of the Spirit' (a designation that he shares with kings and priests) applies only to a man. In fact all who are reborn in Christ and live piously in him are called 'children of God.'[17]

Is it not a superb commendation to be called 'light of the world'?[18] The Lord deemed his apostles worthy of the honour of this name: 'You are the light of the world, you are the salt of the earth.'[19] Yet the glory of this title

* * * * *

14 Col 1:15

15 Cf 1 Cor 1:24.

16 'Word or speech' (*verbum aut sermo*); John 1:1. Erasmus elsewhere dwells on the richness of the Greek word *logos* (λόγος), which denotes both 'word' and 'speech,' as well as many other meanings, eg reason, method, theory. For Erasmus' preferences for 'speech' (*sermo*) over 'word' (*verbum*), see *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 15–16: 'And there is no other object that more fully and clearly expresses the invisible form of the mind than speech that does not lie' (15). Erasmus states: 'And I wonder why *verbum* pleased the Latin authors more than *sermo*'; see ASD VI-6 29–40, especially 30. See also Jane E. Phillips' extensive notes 16 and 17 in *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 15 (notes appear on 234–5). See also 15 n19 (235) for Erasmus' preference for *oratio.* Erasmus returns to these favourite themes of his earlier writings: Christ as 'the Word' *verbum* or 'Speech of God' *oratio dei*. See *Apologia de 'In principio erat sermo'* LB IX 111–22. For Erasmus on 'the heavenly philosophy' and 'the philosophy of Christ,' see eg *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 7, 14, 34 n131; *Enchiridion* CWE 66 xxii–xxv, 9, 11, 13 and especially letter to Paul Volz (14 August 1518), Ep 858. See also '*Mystère*' passim.

17 Luke 20:36; John 1:12; Rom 8:16; Gal 3:26, 4:5–6

18 Matt 5:14

19 'You are the light of the world, you are the salt of the earth' (Matt 5:13–14); 'gods' (Ps 82:6 [Vulg 81:6]; John 10:34). Erasmus reads in this psalm the terrifying reality of Christ, God, as judge of all 'gods' called to preach. See book 1 254 below and book 4 CWE 68 1069–71.

is owed to all who faithfully perform the apostles' role, just as they have succeeded to the apostles' place. It is even loftier to be called a 'messenger of God.'[20] Malachi uses this title to honour the priest who is learned and versed in the law of the Lord, saying, 'The lips of the priest guard knowledge, and men seek the law from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.'[21] But more glorious even than this praise is to be called 'children of God'[22] and even 'gods';[23] this is how those pious men were addressed to whom God's Speech was directed and who communicated to the people in good faith what they had heard: 'I have said, you are gods and all sons of the Most High.' It is not right to equivocate about this testimony, which was spoken in the prophetic spirit in Psalm 81; the Lord himself cites and interprets it as irrefutable Scripture at John 10.[24]

In the midst of these gods stands the Redeemer[25] himself, the highest *ecclesiastes*, judge of those who dispense the word of God whether rightly or otherwise, for the Psalm reads, 'God stood in the council of the gods, in the midst he judges the gods.'[26] Just as we are made one in nature with Christ the head[27] through spiritual rebirth, so at the same time we are conveyed into the honour of his name and the sharing of his titles. He, the Son of God, has adopted us as his brothers; we have a common father, so that we too are already deservedly called the children of God, especially if we imitate the Son of God in preaching the gospel. He is God from God; if we remain in him, we too are rightly called gods, for what is born from God, what is made one and the same with God, must in some sense be God.[28]

Though I have said this to show the loftiness of the preacher's office, let us yet remember that the terms 'son' and 'god' are applied differently to us and to Christ. He is Son by nature,[29] we by adoption;[30] he was born God

* * * * *

20 'The lips of the priest . . . messenger of the Lord of hosts' Mal 2:7
21 Mal 2:7
22 Luke 20:36; John 1:12; Rom 8:16; Gal 3:26, 4:5–6
23 Ps 82:6 (Vulg 81:6); John 10:34
24 See John 10:34– 5 and Ps 82:6 (Vulg 81:6).
25 Chomarat notes the rare occurrence of the word 'Redeemer' in Erasmus, whose view of Christ's salvific role is fundamentally that of the teacher who imparts heavenly wisdom, thereby restoring through his word the knowledge of things once known and necessary for salvation but lost through human dereliction. See ASD V-4 39 79n.
26 Ps 82:1 (Vulg 81:1)
27 Cf Eph 4:15.
28 Cf Rom 8:15–17, 5:5; John 17:21–2.
29 Cf John 1:1; Nicene Creed DS 125 (*de substantia Patris, Deum ex Deo*).
30 Rom 8:15–17

without beginning out of the substance of God, and we have been adopted mercifully through him into a share of immortality.[31]

There are likewise many other honorary titles with which Scripture dignifies the men who interpret the divine will, calling them 'heavens' that tell the glory of God.[32] They are called prophets,[33] a matter of which we shall speak later. Only Christ, who alone is God by nature, was called the 'Word of God';[34] according to this nature, he is designated by the title 'Word of God,' whose heralds are the preachers. A man's speech is the truthful image of his mind, reflected in his words as in a mirror;[35] 'for thoughts proceed from the heart,'[36] the Lord says. Christ however is the almighty Word of God, which flows forth eternally without beginning, without end from the eternal heart of the Father; through it the Father created the universe, through it he rules all creation, through it he restored the fallen human race,[37] through it he bound the church to himself, through it he desired to become known to the world in a singular and ineffable manner, through it he brings the dead to life, through it he bestows the gifts of the Holy Spirit, through it he imparts a mystical power to the sacraments of the church, through it he will judge the world when the goats are separated from the lambs[38] and a new heaven and a new earth[39] are created not by the destruction of matter but by the removal of corruption.[40] Through it the Father will intoxicate and sate the angels and the whole city of the heavenly Jerusalem with the abundance of his house, for a wise son is the joy and glory of his

* * * * *

31 Rom 8:15–17
32 Ps 19:1, 18:2 (Vulg 18). Erasmus interprets this verse allegorically.
33 For 'prophets,' see 322, 372, 386–98 below.
34 John 1:1 (*verbum Dei*)
35 Cf Col 1:15; see also *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 15–16: 'Speech is truly the mirror of the heart, which cannot be seen with the body's eyes.'
36 Erasmus requires that the preacher's speech be filled with the spirit of God who animates his heart: 'As is the heart, so is the speech' (see 261 below). The preacher's model is Christ, the Word of God, who perfectly expressed his divinity; in imitation of Christ, the preacher 'must take care first and with the greatest effort to render his heart the purest possible source of speech.' The preacher's life, therefore, must be one of continuous attention to the virtues, to possess a 'clean heart.' 'For thoughts proceed from the heart' (Matt 15:19; Mark 7:21; Rom 10:8–10).
37 Erasmus makes clear the restorative role of Christ: his word repairs, restores, recreates what had been lost through Adam's sin and human sinfulness.
38 Cf Matt 25:32–3.
39 2 Pet 3:13
40 See book 4 for Erasmus' idea of the world restored in peace and concord.

father.[41] This is that incomprehensible Word, surest expounder of the divine mind and never in conflict with the model of perfect truth; through this that eternal mind spoke wondrously to us at the creation of the world;[42] through this it spoke in various ways to us in the prophets;[43] through this he told us quite openly that a man born of man had been sent to earth, so that now it not only tugged at our ears but could be perceived with all the senses, palpable even to our very hands.[44]

But the word of man is not produced without spirit;[45] rather, as is our speech, so is our spirit.[46] But in divinity, just as the one that produces the Word is almighty, and the Word produced is equally almighty, so the Spirit too, which proceeds equally from each,[47] is almighty. However, just as nothing can be imagined above the sublimity of that divine mind (if indeed human imagination can reach it at all),[48] so there is nothing in man more outstanding than the mind, the part in which we differ most from the nature of beasts and reflect a kind of image of the divine mind.[49] It was surely wonder at this that led the greatest philosophers to suspect that human souls are like the sparks of that unchanging light;[50] imitating them,

* * * * *

41 Cf Prov 10:1.
42 Genesis 1
43 Heb 1:1
44 *Adagia* I vii 40 *Aurem vellere* 'To pluck by the ear'; 1 John 1:1–2
45 Erasmus is playing on the twofold and related senses of the Latin word *spiritus*, which means both 'spirit' and 'breath.'
46 Cf Matt 15:18–19; Mark 7:21; Rom 10:8–10.
47 Erasmus repeats the Latin phrase from the *Symbolum Constantinopolitanum* (DS 150), *Et in Spiritum Sanctum ... qui ex Patre Filioque procedit ...* which differs from the Greek, 'who proceeds from the Father' (*τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον*). See also DS 1300–2 for the Council of Florence's *Decretum pro Graecis* (*Laetentur caeli*, 6 July 1439): 'Spiritus Sanctus ex Patre et Filio aeternaliter est, et essentiam suam suumque esse subsistens habet ex Patre simul et Filio, et ex utroque aeternaliter tamquam ab uno principio et unica spiratione procedit.' For many reasons the Greeks later abandoned this formulation. Cf Jedin IV 479–82 and 496–8.
48 For the 'ontological argument' Erasmus possibly alludes to here, see Anselm of Canterbury *Proslogion* trans Thomas Williams (Indianapolis and Cambridge 1995/2001) especially chapter 15.
49 See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 29 aa 1–9.
50 Erasmus expresses the classical topos of the exalted nature of the human mind, which differentiates human beings from brute beasts and reflects 'a kind of image of the divine mind.' 'The greatest philosophers' refers here to the Platonists, Neoplatonists, Stoics, and Pythagoreans. For Stoic beliefs, see Cicero *De natura deorum* 2, especially 2.6.18–2.8.22 and passim. Cf Sallust *Coniuratio Catilinae* 1.1–4.

Horace wrote: 'And fixes on the ground a particle of air divine.'[51] They are grossly mistaken indeed in thinking that anything created can be a part of God,[52] as if God were a physical thing that can be cut or propagated; but they realized correctly that nowhere does man approach nearer the nature of eternal divinity than in mind and speech, which the Greeks call *νοῦς καὶ λόγος* [mind and speech]. Mind is the source, speech the image that flows forth from the source. However, just as that singular Word of God is the image of the Father,[53] so thoroughly like its author that it shares with him the same indivisible nature, so speech is a sort of image of the human mind, the most marvellous or mighty thing that man possesses;[54] hence Hesiod calls it 'man's most excellent treasure.'[55] If it differs from the heart from which it proceeds, it does not deserve even the name of speech, no more indeed than a mask deserves to be called a face or rouge a person's complexion. Moreover, just as a wind blowing from a pestilential or a salubrious place brings with it the power of that place, so speech, as it flows forth from the heart, which is the source of speech, reflects its strength and disposition with remarkable power, so that there is no other part of himself in which man is more useful or more dangerous to man.

Moreover, those who have a double heart (the kind that Scripture criticizes by saying, 'They have spoken with a double heart,'[56] and likewise Ecclesiasticus, 'Woe to the double heart'[57]) have no heart at all and do not speak even when they say much, for the function of speech is to express in words what you have conceived in your mind.

Now, just as waters that bring intoxication, madness, disease, and death flow from certain springs, and just as exhalations that bring instant death to

* * * * *

51 Horace *Satires* 2.2.79: *atque adfigit humo divinae particulam aurae*. Erasmus takes this line somewhat out of context; but see Cicero *De senectute* 21.78 where he notes that Pythagoras 'never doubted that our souls were emanations of the universal divine mind.'

52 That the human soul is part of the divine substance Erasmus, of course, rejects because nothing created can be a part of God. The immortal soul is created, and God in the essential simplicity of his nature is indivisible. See also Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 3 a 7.

53 Cf Heb 1:3; Col 1:15.

54 Cicero *De natura deorum* 2.59.148–9: 'Then take the gift of speech, the queen of arts as you are fond of calling it – what a glorious, what a divine faculty it is!'

55 Hesiod *Works and Days* 719; Aulus Gellius quotes this line of Hesiod in *Noctes Atticae* 1.15.14.

56 Ps 12:2 (Vulg 11:3)

57 Ecclus 2:12. Erasmus explains below the meaning of 'double heart'; see 269.

those nearby blow from certain caves while others heal physical ailments, so there is nothing more wholesome than speech that proceeds from a sound and devout mind and, conversely, nothing more dangerous than speech breathed out by a heart corrupted and tainted by wicked opinions, base desires, and vices. People shudder at the hissing of a snake and flee quickly, fearing that it might breathe some poison upon them (for snakes harm in this way too, not by bite alone); but we should shudder much more at the conversation of a pestilential man who breathes out only the lethal venom of his soul. Physicians rightly warn us not to speak at close quarters with those infected with the pox commonly called 'French'[58] (though that form of leprosy, which spread from Italy, is, alas, common to all nations equally), since the contagion spreads most easily from drawing in the breath of someone tainted by this plague, but it is infinitely more dangerous to draw in the speech that flows out of an infected heart. A man's speech is like his heart. The man who has an earthly heart speaks earthly things, the one who has a heart of flesh speaks things of the flesh, the one who has the devil in his heart speaks the devil and breathes him on others: the man who has Christ's spirit in his heart speaks things heavenly, devout, holy, chaste, and worthy of God.[59]

To have Christ's spirit inhabiting the heart is in fact common to all Christians, but it especially befits the preacher, who could set before himself no more perfect model than that of the highest orator, who was called 'the Word,'[60] that is, the image and voice, of God. The tongue of the orator can be effective only if Christ's spirit inhabits his heart, moves the plectrum

* * * * *

58 'French' pox refers to syphilis, which was called different names at this time. Syphilis was commonly referred to as the 'sickness of Naples'; here Erasmus identifies it as spreading from Italy. Erasmus often mentions this disease (eg CWE 25 307, Ep 892, *Colloquia* [Ἱππεὺς ἄνιππος / *sive Ementita nobilitas*]). See *The Great Pox: The French Disease in Renaissance Europe* ed Jon Arrizabalaga et al (New Haven c 1997); and *Medicine from the Black Death to the French Disease* ed Roger French et al (Aldershot 1998). Erasmus' comparisons throughout this chapter draw attention to the vast difference between things noxious to the body and things noxious to the spirit; the phrase 'by how much more' (*quanto magis*) is a favoured rhetorical device for amplification, which signals his use of comparison moving from things of lesser importance to greater ones. Useful for Erasmus' general method of using rhetorical arguments of all kinds is his *De copia*, which lays out ways of arguing effectively (CWE 24 572–659). Cf Quintilian 8.4.9–12.

59 Cf Ps 12:6 (Vulg 11:7): 'The words of the Lord are pure words' (*eloquia domini, eloquia casta*).

60 John 1:1, 14. Erasmus uses the term *sermo* for 'the Word.'

of his mouth,[61] and imparts mystical force to the words that flow forth. The voice of the orator can strike the ears of his audience, but it is God alone who transforms their minds with secret inspiration.[62] Yet the preacher strives without pause, planting and watering and asking Christ's spirit to give increase,[63] in short imitating that highest preacher in everything so far as his strength allows.[64]

And what does he say about himself? 'I am the way, truth, and life,'[65] he says. Satan, speaking through the serpent, led the human race astray;[66] God, speaking through his Son, led back the straying sheep.[67] He deceived the founders of the human race with lies; Christ freed the world from error by speaking the truth.[68] Cast down from heaven, he dragged the world into ruin, trapped it into sharing his rebellion, and ensnared it into partaking of death; Christ, descending to earth from the bosom of the Father, won back the lost and restored the dead to life. The former drove out of Paradise those who trusted in him; the latter carries up into heaven those who have faith in him. The preacher has an example to avoid; he has one to follow. Let him shun the serpent that even today speaks through those who have Satan and the world in their heart; let him follow Christ in the apostles, who did not speak themselves but rather that divine Spirit spoke through them as if through a living organ.

And so anyone who is preparing for so excellent an office as this must be equipped with many things:[69] recondite knowledge of the sacred books, much proficiency in Scripture, varied reading of the doctors, sound judgment, uncommon prudence, a mind sincere and strong, the theory and

* * * * *

61 Cf Cicero *De natura deorum* 2.59.148–9; and Isidore *Etymologiae* 9.1.51.

62 Cf Rom 10:17.

63 1 Cor 3:6–8; cf Matt 9:37–8.

64 Throughout *Ecclesiastes* Erasmus refrains from urging preachers to imitate great preachers whether past or present; instead he recommends imitating Christ, 'that highest preacher in everything.'

65 John 14:6

66 Cf Genesis 3. Chomarat correctly notes that nowhere in Scripture is Satan identified with the serpent in the Garden of Eden; see ASD V-4 43 176n. In book 4 Erasmus takes up again the contrast between Satan leading away and Christ bringing back or restoring. Chomarat describes this as the opposition '*deduco-reduco*' (cf Tob 13:2; Wisd of Sol 16:13; 1 Kings 2:6); see ASD V-4 43 176–7n.

67 Cf John 10:11–16; Matt 12:11.

68 Cf John 8:32.

69 Here Erasmus begins to enumerate the qualities and set forth the extensive preparation of the preacher, which is the substance of this treatise.

practice of speaking, and a ready fluency of speech with which he must speak before a crowd, and others as well that I shall mention in their place. In my opinion, however, the man who prepares himself for so high an office must take care first and with the greatest effort to render his heart the purest possible source of speech.[70] This advice is easily given 'by numbers,'[71] as they say, but it is by far the most difficult of all to impart, and it requires much extended practice. It is moreover pre-eminently necessary, not only for teaching and inflaming the minds of the audience, not only for steadfastly protecting the truth against detractors, but also for acquiring knowledge of the heavenly philosophy that you are going to hand on to others. Human disciplines can be learned even by the wicked; but this divine wisdom does not enter a mind contaminated by vice, and it does not deign to dwell in a body prey to sin. Moreover, just as we learn more easily what we believe to be most true and necessary for man's enduring happiness, so we more effectively persuade others of that by which we ourselves are strongly affected. Finally, we defend the cause more bravely if we remember that we are only the dispensers of God's mysteries,[72] that it is God who gives the strength and bestows a happy outcome upon human endeavour.

Therefore the future preacher must strive right from his youth to obtain from the Lord a new heart and an upright spirit by a profound experience of Holy Scripture, a new heart in which there is nothing, or as little as possible, of the old Adam,[73] and an upright spirit unbroken and erect against all of Satan's wiles. For he alone can bestow what God promised through Ezekiel, saying, 'A new heart I will give you, a new spirit I will put within you.'[74] Only new wineskins hold new wine.[75] What Ezekiel calls a 'new heart' David calls a 'clean heart.' He asks the Lord for this urgently when intending to perform the office of a herald: 'Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew an upright spirit within me.'[76] After receiving it, he promises to fulfil the duty of the preacher: 'I will teach transgressors your

* * * * *

70 These words recall the prayer inspired by the words of Isaiah (6:6–7) and spoken by the priest before reading the Gospel at the liturgy: *munda cor meum ac labia mea* . . .

71 *Adagia* III vii 58. The phrase seems to mean 'fluently,' 'glibly.'

72 1 Cor 4:1

73 Adam means 'man'; Paul exhorts the Corinthians to be made new in Christ, the new 'man' ('Adam'); see 1 Cor 15:22, 45; cf Rom 5:12–21. See also *Paraphrasis in epistolam ad Romanos* CWE 42 34–6.

74 Ezek 36:26

75 Matt 9:17

76 Ps 51:10 (Vulg 50:12)

ways, and sinners will turn to you.'[77] After cleansing our eyes, we perceive more correctly the distinctive features of external objects: with a clean heart we have a more accurate view of God hidden in the coverings of Scripture.[78] He asks first for a clean heart, then for an upright spirit, for unconquerable vigour of spirit arises from sincerity of the heart; but God makes each anew. As is the heart, so is the speech; as the faith, so the courage. When the heart has been made anew, new tongues too begin to sound at once no longer what belongs to this world, no longer what smacks of the earth, but the magnificence of God. For what is so lofty in human affairs that it does not seem more base than mud when compared to that sublimity of the divine philosophy? That heavenly and truly fiery Spirit,[79] moreover, is not only an examiner of hearts[80] but also a creator and a renewer and has knowledge of speech as well. Hence anyone who believes that he can acquire true understanding of canonical Scripture without the inspiration of that Spirit whence they were produced is grievously mistaken; no less mistaken is the man who believes that he can act the true preacher without a draught of the heavenly Spirit, without which no one can say Jesus is Lord.[81] He bestows a fiery heart, fiery tongues.[82] What was more uninspired than the tongues of the apostles before they had drawn in fully that heavenly craftsman of new hearts? They said, 'We ask that one sit at your left hand, the other at your right in your kingdom.'[83] Thus James and John. What about Peter, who was to be the chief of the apostles? 'Perish the thought, Lord; let this not happen to you.'[84] But what was the reply? 'Your thoughts are not divine but mortal.'[85] An old and human heart shudders at death, seeks power and happiness in this life. From the same heart came that remark upon the mountain, 'Lord, it is good that we are here; let us make

* * * * *

77 Ps 51:13 (Vulg 50:15)
78 In later books, Erasmus takes up 'God hidden in the coverings of Scripture.'
79 Cf Acts 2:2–4.
80 Cf Rom 8:27; Rev 2:23.
81 'without . . . Lord' 1 Cor 12:3; Erasmus' 1524 translation of the New Testament reads: . . . *& nemo potest dicere Dominum Jesum, nisi per Sanctum Spiritum*.
82 Acts 2:1–5. Erasmus refers here to the Holy Spirit, 'the heavenly craftsman of new hearts,' whose descent on Pentecost gave the apostles force and the power of persuasion; before this they were 'rather uninspired' (*frigidius*).
83 Matt 20:20–8; Mark 10:35–45
84 See Matt 16:21–3. These words of Peter do not belong to the incident where James and John ask for the most prominent places in Jesus' kingdom; they belong rather to the pericope where Jesus foretells his death in Jerusalem at the hands of the elders, chief priests, and scribes.
85 Matt 16:23

three tents here.'[86] Still more uninspired, though shared by all the apostles, was when they said, 'Which of us will be first in the kingdom of heaven?'[87] But the most uninspired of all was when they said, 'Do you want us to bid fire come down from heaven and burn the city?'[88] And what is the reply? 'You do not know of what manner of spirit you are.'[89] Those were the words of a Jewish spirit thirsting for vengeance, though they professed themselves disciples of the most gentle Christ.[90] There are many other remarks of the apostles in the gospels with the full flavour of man and of the flesh, since they were not yet suitable heralds of the gospel; but as soon as that Spirit, which makes all things new, had slipped down from heaven into their breasts and fashioned in them a new heart, a clean heart, a heavenly heart, a fiery heart, they began to speak at once, with new tongues, words that were no longer human as before but worthy of the Spirit, which they had absorbed.[91]

If you want to see courage, the fisherman who earlier denied the Lord so many times when addressed by some woman now dares to come forward to speak with his eyes fixed upon the crowd,[92] in front of a huge and even riotous mob composed of various nations and tongues, and to raise his voice and preach Christ and him crucified.[93] If you are wondering about the result, some three thousand men were converted that day to faith in the gospel at a fisherman's extemporaneous and unstudied address.[94] Therefore, whoever desires to be διδακτικός in Paul's sense, that is, suited to imparting the teaching of God, let him strive first to be θεοδίδακτος, that is, divinely

* * * * *

86 Matt 17:4; Mark 9:5; Luke 9:33

87 Matt 18:1; Mark 9:34; Luke 9:46. Erasmus' quotation is not exact; he uses 'first' (*primus*) while the Synoptics use 'greater' (*maior*).

88 Luke 9:54

89 In the Vulgate Jesus does not utter these words in rebuking James and John (Luke 9:55); the words are found in some older manuscripts; see Nestle-Aland 190 n55–6 and Vulg 1627 n55.

90 Erasmus often contrasts the Jewish 'spirit' or 'toughness' with the Christian spirit, which corresponds to his structural antitheses of 'flesh versus spirit,' old man versus new man, shadow versus substance, earthly versus spiritual. These structural antitheses carry over into the ethical sphere; eg vengeance versus pardon, etc. See *Colloquia* (Ἰχθυοφαγία) CWE 40 724 n46; *Paraphrasis in epistolam ad Galatas* CWE 42 121–6. See also 324 below.

91 Acts 2:1–4

92 See Matt 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:54–62; John 18:15–18, 25–7.

93 Acts 2:1–14

94 Acts 2:41. Erasmus analyses the rhetorical merits of Peter's speech in book 3 CWE 68 1002–6.

taught.[95] The Lord Jesus had no need for a new anointing of the Spirit or for a renewer of the heart, for his Father had anointed him right from his very birth with every fullness of the Spirit;[96] nevertheless, marked from baptism with the sign of the dove sitting and abiding upon his head,[97] he presented in himself a pattern so that no one would rush to the office of teaching unless inspired by the heavenly Spirit.

But the operation of the Spirit has certain degrees in us, so that it is not enough for the future preacher to have drawn in just any little puff of the Spirit, but he must go right to the principal spirit.[98] David requests a threefold spirit from the Lord when intending to teach his ways: an upright spirit against the attacks of temptations, a holy spirit to inflame the minds of others also and bring them over to sanctity, and a principal spirit, or 'a powerful spirit,' as Jerome translates it,[99] or a 'munificent' or 'liberal' spirit,

* * * * *

95 See 1 Tim 3:2. Erasmus translates the Greek word (διδακτικός) as *appositum ad docendum, ad tradendam Dei doctrinam idoneus* 'suitable to pass on God's teaching'; the Vulgate gives *doctorem* 'one learned.' See *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli Apostoli ad Timotheum priorem* where Erasmus sketches the model bishop: 'There is a special quality which must be looked for in a bishop. He has to have an aptitude and inclination for teaching – not for teaching Jewish myths or the supercilious, inflated philosophies of this world, but the things which make us truly godly and truly Christian' (CWE 44 18–19). Erasmus singles out Basil 'in exposing the mysteries of the sacred books, wondrously διδακτικός, diligent, careful, transparent, and in no way at all violent' (Allen Ep 2611:76–8 to Jacopo Sadoleto, 22 February 1532, preface to Froben's Greek Basil); θεοδίδακτοι 'divinely taught' in 1 Thess 4:9.

96 Cf John 1:14–18.

97 John 1:32–3

98 Ps 51:10–12 (Vulg 50:12–14): 'cor mundum crea in me Deus et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis ne proicias me a facie tua et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui et spiritu principali confirma me' (Vulg). The RSV translates these instances of spirit: at Ps 51:10 the psalmist asks for 'a new and right spirit'; at 51:11 'thy holy spirit'; at 51:12 'a willing spirit.' This is the threefold spirit Erasmus interprets below.

99 Jerome translates the LXX word ἡγεμονικῷ (LXX Ps 50:14; RSV 51:12) as 'powerful' (*potentem*). Cicero explains this term in *De natura deorum* 2.11.29: 'I use the term "ruling principle" (*Principatum autem id dico quod Graeci ἡγεμονικόν vocant*) as the equivalent of the Greek *hêgimonikon*, meaning that part of anything which must and ought to have supremacy in a thing of that sort. Thus it follows that the element which contains the ruling principle of the whole of nature must also be the most excellent of all things and the most deserving of authority and sovereignty over all things.' For the meaning of this term in Stoic philosophy, see John M. Rist *Stoic Philosophy* (Cambridge 1969) 24: 'The ἡγεμονικόν is something of what we might call the "true self" or personality

as someone else has it, for the richness of perfection.[100] The Lord Jesus blew upon the face of his apostles before he rose to heaven saying, 'Receive the Holy Spirit,'[101] yet there still remained some trace of human weakness in them when they said, 'Lord, will you be presented to us at this time, and when will be the kingdom of Israel?'[102] They are still being reproached for their hardness of heart and slowness to believe; but as soon as they drank that munificent Spirit, which overflowed so torrentially that it filled the whole house,[103] they stood now far above all human affairs and preached the gospel with such confidence that, though beaten with rods,[104] they went rejoicing from the council, rejoicing however not because they had been acquitted but because they deemed it a singular glory to themselves to have been marked with disgrace for Jesus' name.[105] Being strengthened now by the principal spirit, they are not frightened by any threats of the wicked or cast down by any afflictions or elated or puffed up by any honours; for this too is no mean snare. For just as those who preach the word of God sincerely must meet the varied storms of temptations, so the highest honour has always been paid to those who preach the gospel worthily. On either side there is great danger: on the one side threaten the rocks of Scylla, which entice towards arrogance, on the other side Charybdis,[106] which sucks the mind down in a multitude

* * * * *

of each individual human being. It will therefore more aptly be rendered by words referring to personality than by words referring to rationality.' See also Jerome [*Commentarius*] *in Danielem prophetam* (chapter 1 ii 28c lines 330–2) CCSL 75A 791; and Tertullian *De anima* 14 ANF III 193; Augustine *De natura et origine animae* 4.5.6 NPNF 1st series 5 356–7. See also Ambrose *De apologia David ad Theodosium Augustum* 15.72 CSEL 32 2 347–8; Origen (Origène) *Homélies sur les Nombres* (trans Rufinus) SC 415 Homilia 6 par 3 35:2; see also *Homélies sur le Lévitique* (trans Rufinus) SC 287 Homilia 8 par 11 66:161–2. Augustine also uses the word 'principal' when citing Ps 50:14; see eg *Ennarationes in psalmos* CCSL 38 Psalm 50 par 17 lines 8 and 13; par 18 lines 1 and 6; WSA III-16 424–5.

100 This commentator has not been identified.

101 John 20:22. John offers this passage, which suggests that Jesus bestowed the Holy Spirit upon his apostles shortly after the resurrection; John does not give an account of the ascension as do Luke and Mark. For the ascension, see Acts 1:9; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19.

102 Cf Acts 1:6.

103 Acts 2:1–4

104 Acts 5:40; cf 2 Cor 11:25 (St Paul). Erasmus is conflating a number of scriptural passages, which, while adding force to his argument, creates problems in historical sequence and fact.

105 Acts 5:41

106 Erasmus' allusion is to Homer's *Odyssey* 12.85–126, 222–59 and Virgil's *Aeneid* 3.420–32; see also *Adagia* I v 4; *De copia* CWE 24 611–2, which Erasmus lists as a

of afflictions and drags it into despair. The preacher must be thoroughly fortified against either peril, and I am not at all sure whether there is not more danger from what allures than from what terrifies. Paul boasts amid his afflictions and infirmities that the power of Christ dwells and reigns inside him;[107] concerning his revelations, he is afraid to boast.[108] In the former case he confesses his name, in the latter he is ἀνώνυμος,[109] anonymous: 'I know a man,' he says. He is Paul when beaten with rods, when bound in chains, when thrown to beasts, when pelted with stones; but when he is snatched up into the third heaven, he suppresses his name. At Philippi, with his clothes ripped, his body torn by the wounds of the rods, in chains, in the depths of a prison, starving, he sings at night with his colleague Silas;[110] but at Lystra, with his colleague Barnabas, when the ignorant and superstitious populace was preparing divine honours because of the healing of a lame man, he rent his garments and leapt forward declaring that he was only a mortal man like them.[111] Indeed, at Caesarea Peter does not tolerate the obeisance and worship of Cornelius but raises him up saying, 'Stand up; I too am a man,'[112] and he equates himself with the person to whom he would soon give the Holy Spirit;[113] so free was his mind from all desire for glory. The great veneration with which the believers are wont to receive Paul, the great honour with which they send him off is clear enough from the Acts of the Apostles; indeed he himself gives adequate evidence of this when he writes to the Galatians, 'You received me as an angel of God,' an outstanding honour, but he adds something loftier: 'like Jesus Christ.'[114] And soon after, in the same passage, 'I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me.'[115] Yet he took on no air of haughtiness because of these honours, which he had earned in all the churches, but preaches to them through the weakness of the flesh,[116]

* * * * *

moral allegory for teaching on the virtues and vices. See eg Jerome Ep 125.2 NPNF 2nd series 6 245: 'For on one side is the Charybdis of covetousness, "the root of all evil"; and on the other lurks the Scylla of detraction . . .'

107 2 Cor 12:9
108 2 Cor 12:2–10
109 'Nameless'; 'anonymous' (J. Butrica)
110 Acts 16:22–5
111 Acts 14:7–17
112 Acts 10:24–6
113 See Acts 10.
114 Gal 4:14
115 Gal 4:15
116 Gal 4:13

displaying a frail presence[117] even though he had been armed by the Spirit against every arrogance that raises itself against the knowledge of God.[118] He witnesses the same thing about himself writing to the Thessalonians: 'We never used words of flattery, as you know, nor sought an opportunity for greed – God is our witness – and did not seek glory from men, neither from you nor from others, though we could claim for ourselves authority and a grave distinction as apostles of Christ; but we became babes in your midst, as if a nurse were tending her children.'[119] By his zeal for preaching, the same man made himself a slave to everyone though he was free of everyone.[120] This was not a mark of adulation or of hypocrisy; the goal proves that. 'In order to win more,'[121] he said; it was the Lord's profit, not his own, that he sought everywhere. Many marvel at St Paul's unfailing fortitude and alacrity in the midst of so many worries, dangers, afflictions, disgraces, deaths – and with excellent reason. But I think that his constant and unfailing modesty and humility of mind in the midst of his great strengths and the great glory of his accomplishments are more marvellous. On the model of this man, then, let the Christian preacher always remember, after he has been supplied with every kind of gift, that he has that treasure in earthen vessels,[122] so that the loftiness is the power of God and not from human strength: 'To the one who has, it will be given; from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.'[123] The man who seeks profit from them for himself or hunts his own glory does not know how to have the gifts of the Spirit; he truly has them who earnestly invests the talents entrusted to him, not for his own gain but for the profit of the Lord, to whom is owed both principal and interest, not expecting his reward here but content that, having done his work faithfully, he will hear that blessed and longed-for phrase, 'Enter into the joy of your Lord.'[124] To a man who has them in this way, then, more will be given; from a man who has them other than he ought even what was given free will be snatched away. If you hold it as another's, not as your own, then it truly becomes yours; if you hold as your

* * * * *

117 Gal 4:13; 2 Cor 10:10
118 Eph 6:11–17
119 1 Thess 2:5–7. Erasmus' rendering of these verses differs from the Vulgate, especially verse 7. He inserts 'and a grave distinction . . .' (*et gravitatis dignitatem nobis vindicare, tanquam*) to complete St Paul's thought. See LB VI 904A–906A.
120 1 Cor 9:19
121 1 Cor 9:19
122 2 Cor 4:7
123 Matt 13:12, 25:29; Mark 4:24–5; Luke 8:18, 19:26
124 Matt 25:21–3. Erasmus recalls Jesus' parable of the talents (Matt 25:14–30).

own what is another's, you do not have what you have, since you have it to your own sorrow. For if the famous maxim of the mime that 'the miser lacks what he has as much as what he has not'[125] has deservedly won praise from learned men because possession is pointless if you take no use from it, then much more will a man be said not to have if he has what he has to his own ruin. Actors who perform a play for the crowd, though they have omitted no kind of effort or attention to please the theatre, are nevertheless compelled to have a strong heart against the hissings and stampings of the people, who do not always like excellence; for truly, as the writer says, 'every people is a beast of many heads,'[126] not just the Roman. But the preacher must have the solid and unmovable spirit that David calls principal,[127] not only against the perverse judgments of the people, against the malice of those who slander even devout words, against the animosities of those whose corrupt life makes them hate the truth, but also against the acclamations and applause of those who praise them. 'It is typical of kings,' said some high-minded pagan, 'to have a bad reputation when one does good deeds.'[128] An actor endeavours to make his performance as pleasing as possible to the people; he thrives on applause, is dejected by hisses. The preacher aims to commend to the people things that are excellent in themselves. The only one who will be able to accomplish this is the man who has a clean heart,[129] pure from the love of wealth, pure from the thirst for earthly glory, pure from the ambition and other desires that frequently make us neither suitable to learn Christian wisdom nor strong enough to preach it steadfastly, inasmuch as we have not yet been strengthened by the principal spirit; this spirit places all its trust in the Lord so that it neither fears the world nor trembles at Satan nor shudders at a death threatened because of

* * * * *

125 Publilius Syrus 694. Erasmus published Publilius Syrus' mimes in *Disticha moralia titulo Catonis . . . Mimi Publiani (cum scholiis Erasmi) . . .* (London: Wynken de Worde 1514). See CWE 29 xxxviii–ix.

126 Horace *Epistles* 1.1.76. Erasmus changes Horace's line from 'You are a beast of many heads' (*Belua multorum es capitum*) to '[every people] is a beast of many heads.'

127 Ps 51:12 (Vulg 50:14)

128 Plutarch *Moralia* 181.32F, *Sayings of Kings and Commanders* (Alexander [the Great]): 'It is kingly to be ill spoken of for doing good.' This was a common aphorism in the ancient world. See also *Sayings Falsely Ascribed to Publilius* 112: *Est regium male audire et bene facere*, Eduardus Woefflin *Publilii Syri Sententiae. Ad fidem codicum optimorum primum recensuit Eduardus Woefflin. Accedit incerti auctoris liber qui vulgo dicitur de moribus* (Leipzig 1869) 123:112.

129 Ps 51:10 (Vulg 50:12); cf Isa 6:6–7.

the gospel, so long as the man preaches it with a good conscience. This then is the special source of the preacher's eloquence, a heart clean and fortified by the threefold spirit. That perceptive man Horace saw this as if through a cloud when he said, 'Wisdom is both the beginning and the source of speaking rightly.'[130] For knowledge is one thing, wisdom another. Even demons know much and have in fact taken their name from this (if we believe the grammarians), being called demons as if δαήμονες, that is, 'knowing'; yet no one says that they are wise.[131] The wise man is the one who has learned not everything but what pertains to true happiness, and is affected and has been transfigured by what he has learned. This happens whenever the food of the gospel's teaching,[132] taken with full faith, has been transported into the organs of the mind and has passed into an attitude and strength of spirit. It is right, therefore, that concern for this should be first [*praecipuum*] in accordance with its pre-eminence.[133]

* * * * *

130 Horace *Ars poetica* 309. Horace's line reads: 'Of good writing the source and fount is wisdom' (*Scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons*), which Erasmus changes to 'Of good speaking' (*Dicendi*). This echoes Cato's definition of the orator as 'a good man skilled in speaking,' as related by Quintilian 12.1.1. The essence of eloquence therefore lies in the moral exemplarity of the speaker.

131 Cf *Moria* CWE 27 107, where demons are said to have been 'given their name because it means "those who know" [δάω] in Greek.' See also in this place the true wise man as opposed to those who 'know' or have knowledge. Chomarat notes that Erasmus' etymology is wrong; see ASD V-4 53 360n. Cf Plato *Cratylus* 397C–8C, especially 398B, where Socrates states it is his 'most entire conviction that he [Hesiod] called them daemons, because they were δαήμονες (knowing or wise) . . .'

132 The alimentary metaphors for the philosophy of Christ, the word of God, for example, go back deep in biblical and Christian tradition and are used in conciliar statements on preaching and its reform; see eg the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) Canon 10 *De predicatoribus instituendis* in Tanner I 239: 'Among the various things that are conducive to the salvation of the Christian people, the nourishment of God's word is recognized to be especially necessary, since just as the body is fed with material food, so the soul is fed with spiritual food, according to the words, "Man lives not by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."' Throughout this treatise Erasmus extensively selects such metaphors of nourishment, sweetness, and delight.

133 Erasmus applies the word 'pre-eminent' (*praecipuum*) regularly to the duty of preaching, greater than which there is none. Here Erasmus formulates the essence of the duty of preaching: that it does not involve learning everything, but 'those things that lead to true felicity'; elsewhere he gives as the content of preaching 'the things necessary for salvation' (*res necessariae ad salutem*). This is the true matter of preaching and the essential duty of the bishop. See 313–14, 344 below and book 4 CWE 68 1040 below. See also *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70

But human philosophy does not impart it, nor can humanity's native strength give it to anyone; it must be sought from him who alone dispenses true blessings, sought however not casually but with prayers at once constant and ardent. Nor must one request it only in prayers, but it must also be sought through good works so that what has been given may be kept and may daily increase. Someone who requests such a gift coolly is unworthy to receive it, and it is a kind of ingratitude to possess carelessly a gift that is both costly and received without payment; an ingrate, in fact, deserves to be deprived even of that which has been given. The Lord bestows a new heart, bestows a strengthening spirit; he likewise preserves and increases what he has given, but not for the careless, not for those with a double heart.[134]

Now to possess a double heart is to attempt to fight for the world and the gospel at the same time, that is, to try to mix an old heart with a new, the spirit of Adam with the spirit of Christ.[135] Those who fight for Caesar, men fighting for a man, are not entangled in cares that the Apostle calls βιωτικοῖ, that is, the cares of this life,[136] but leave off commerce, agriculture, manufacture, and other industries of this kind from which they were wont to earn their living, in order to be free from anxiety over their own property and to serve their emperor with all their heart,[137] content with their pay. How much more, then, should those who fight this glorious fight for God have an undivided heart and be untouched not only by luxury, pleasures, and other similar vices but also by those humbler concerns that, though they do not drag a man towards wrong, nevertheless do divert his mind from the loftiness that is required in a preacher. The warrior for Christ[138] is anyone

* * * * *

240 n24: '"*Praecipuum*": the original meaning of this term denotes that which is received from an inheritance before the general distribution.'

134 Ecclus 2:12, 1:28 *et ne accesseris ad illum duplici corde*

135 Cf 1 Cor 15:22, 45.

136 See Luke 21:34; see Nestle-Aland 231, where the reading in Greek is βιωτικαῖς.

137 Cf 2 Tim 2:3–4 'The soldier's aim is to please the enlisting officer.'

138 'Militat quidem Christo, quisquis illi dedit nomen in baptismo, sed *praecipue*, cui in alios commissus est gladius spiritus, quod est verbum Dei' (emphasis added); cf 2 Tim 2:3 'a good soldier of Christ Jesus.' For the currency of these metaphors in early Christianity, see Adolf von Harnack *Militia Christi: The Christian Religion and the Military in the First Three Centuries* trans David McInnes Gracie (Philadelphia c 1981). See of course *Enchiridion* CWE 66 1–127. Erasmus employs the Latin word *praecipue* in reference to this most important duty; the principle duty of the bishop is teaching (*in episcopo, cuius praecipuae partes sunt docere populum*), a crucial theme of *Ecclesiastes*.

who has signed on in baptism, but especially one to whom the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, has been entrusted against others.

Also relevant to pureness of heart is the fact that it is not enough for a herald of the divine word to be pure of every crime[139] unless, as St Paul advised, he also keeps himself from every appearance of evil, so as not to incur the suspicion of wrong in any regard. In a bishop, whose special role is to teach the people,[140] the apostle requires such purity of life and such prudence that he is approved even by the witness of those who are outside;[141] for outstanding virtue has the property of being venerated even by the wicked when closely inspected. Thus the wicked prophet Balaam[142] saw and praised the camp of the Israelites though paid to curse them; thus Pilate revered and, so far as he could, protected the innocence of Christ, which shone in his whole face;[143] thus the people of Jerusalem stood in such awe of Christ's disciples so that no one dared join them – though this was said particularly of those who had not yet believed.[144] Yet even then the people glorified them, not only because of their miracles but much more because of their admirable humility in such power, because of the astounding zeal they displayed amid such afflictions, because their minds showed no trace of greed or boastfulness but were open and ready to benefit everyone without charge.[145] Indeed we often read even in the histories of the heathens that certain people were honoured for an appearance of outstanding virtue. Diogenes, captured as a spy in the camp of King Philip of Macedon, not only was not punished for reproaching the armed king for his madness but was even sent away with a reward;[146] he also escaped punishment for not rising

* * * * *

139 Cf 1 Thess 5:22; Titus 1:7 'blameless.'

140 This phrase will appear in the Council of Trent's decree on preaching (*Decretum secundum publicatum in eadem quinta sessione super lectione et praedicatione*, 17 June 1546), which essentially reiterates Erasmus' teaching and emphasis on the fundamental role of the bishop as teacher (*hoc est praecipuum episcoporum munus*). See *Concilium Tridentinum* v 241–3, especially 242. See McGinness 'Erasmian Legacy' 98–100.

141 1 Tim 3:7

142 Cf Num 22–4. Balaam was a prophet called by the king of Moab to curse the Israelites, but his curses turned out as blessings. 2 Pet 2:15–16, Jude 11, and Rev 2:14 speak of him as typifying the false prophets who lead others astray.

143 Cf Luke 23:1–25; Matt 27:1–2, 11–26; Mark 15:1–15; John 18:28–19:16.

144 Acts 5:13

145 Acts 5:12–16

146 For this story of Diogenes and Philip, here somewhat modified by Erasmus, see Plutarch *Moralia* 606.16B, 70.30C; and Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* 6.2.43. Neither author says that Diogenes was rewarded for his remark.

to meet and not answering respectfully Philip's son Alexander, a youth so ambitious that he had imagined an empire of the whole world.[147] Would it not have been thoroughly human if so mighty a monarch had scorned the Cynic in turn for revenge? He did not scorn him, but to those who urged him in this direction he replied, 'Were I not Alexander, I should wish to be Diogenes,'[148] assigning to the Cynic beggar a place of dignity next to himself. If the unreal shadow and false image of virtue has such power, how strong will be the heroic and true virtue of the divine spirit shining in the speech, life, and face of the preacher?[149]

There is one who said with supreme confidence, 'Who among you will convict me of sin?'[150] and again, 'The prince of this world has come and in me he has not found anything.'[151] And yet that purest lamb,[152] walking about and helping everyone without recompense, teaching with such mildness, did not escape the calumnies of men, was called a companion of publicans,[153] a drinker of wine, a seducer of the people, a Samaritan and a demoniac,[154] a blasphemer, and worthy of stoning:[155] by how much less[156] should this be hoped for by a mere man who, while reproving others' vices in accordance with his office, is himself not wholly pure of vice. Nevertheless, as far as human weakness can bear, the preacher must strive to come as near to the patience of Christ as he does to his purity and innocence. He was obedient to his Father to the point of death upon the

* * * * *

147 Plutarch *Alexander* 14.1–2; see Erasmus *Apophthegmata* CWE 37 279.

148 Diogenes Laertius *Diogenes* 6.32; Plutarch *Alexander* 14.3

149 Throughout *Ecclesiastes*, especially book 1, Erasmus often uses arguments from the greater and from the lesser as a method of amplification in calling attention to the infinite superiority of spiritual over temporal things: eg 'Since men of this world seek this thoughtfulness in cases of this world, how much more should it be required in a preacher; there one man's farm or rank is lost through an orator's lack of thoughtfulness, here countless souls are in danger.' For other methods of amplifying and attenuating, see Quintilian 8.4.1–14. Cf *De copia* CWE 24 377–8, 592–5, 616–20; and *De conscribendis epistolis* CWE 25 90–3.

150 John 8:46

151 John 14:30

152 John 1:29, 36

153 Matt 11:19

154 John 8:48

155 John 10:33

156 Erasmus gives an instance here of argument 'by the lesser' (*a minore*): 'all the less . . . by how much less.' See Erasmus' exposition of various types of methods of this type and others in *De copia* CWE 24 572–659. See also Lausberg §420. Erasmus notes that 'there are just as many ways of toning down what we have to say as there are of building it up' (CWE 24 594 lines 31–2.)

cross;[157] let the preacher likewise strengthen his heart against all of Satan's devices, which are most numerous and most sharp against those who sincerely provide the thing that rescues the greatest number of people from his tyranny and claims them for Christ's domain. The Christian church has nothing more wholesome, nothing more useful, nothing more effective than the word of God, and there is nothing to which Satan is more hostile. But there is no reason for the preacher to become downcast. It is the Lord who gives the word to those who preach the Good News with great power;[158] it is he who grants that the good seed, cast in good faith, grows in its time,[159] he who grants that the strivings of the wicked brighten the glory of God and strengthen his teaching,[160] he who by his own power strengthens human weakness so that it is equal to or rather superior to all the storms of temptations.[161] The Lord indeed was completely pure of every blemish, even of the slightest fault;[162] while this should be desired by all preachers and striven for so far as strength allows, yet I do not think that it can be achieved by anyone (I always except the Virgin Mary, whom one should never mention when discussing vice).[163] With divine aid he will at least achieve purity from capital sins and vices;[164] but if human frailty has not always avoided even these, the next best thing is that it beware of those that the trumpet of foul repute[165] could betray to the people.

Such are luxury and daily drunkenness, notorious adultery, open debauchery, brawls, quarrels;[166] for these strip all credibility and authority from a preacher even though he teaches what is right. Who would believe that someone who lives this way is advocating virtue sincerely? Serving

* * * * *

157 Phil 2:8
158 Ps 68:11 (Vulg 67:12)
159 Cf Matt 13:24–30.
160 Cf 2 Cor 4:4.
161 Cf 1 Cor 10:13.
162 Heb 4:15
163 Erasmus follows Augustine closely; see Augustine *De natura et gratia* 42 [xxxvi] PL 44 267; NPNF 1st series 5 135: 'We must except the holy Virgin Mary, concerning whom I wish to raise no question when it touches the subject of sins, out of honour to the Lord; for from Him we know what abundance of grace for overcoming sin in every particular was conferred upon her who had the merit to conceive and bear Him who undoubtedly had no sin.' See also *De puritate tabernaculi* CWE 65 240 and n94.
164 Cf Titus 1:6–7.
165 See Juvenal *Satires* 14.152 *Sed qui sermones, quam foedae bucina famae!*
166 Cf Titus 1:6–9. Erasmus is expanding the prohibitions that Paul lists in his letter to Titus; cf 1 Tim 3:1–10.

Mammon[167] is no lesser vice than keeping a mistress, yet the latter incurs more contempt; ambition is a more dangerous evil than drunkenness, but among men the latter weakens a man's reputation more than the former. The wrongs of a past life reduce a teacher's authority also, except that those committed before baptism are usually neither defended nor taken into account unless there is a relapse, and sins committed in adolescence are more easily erased if adolescence is followed by a sober and strict early manhood.

Furthermore, the preacher must also consider that some things, because they present a bad appearance, are not free from the suspicion of wrong even though they do not involve wrong. The preacher must circumspectly beware of these as well, such as possessing wealth, building too lavishly, dressing too elegantly, dining too richly, growing merry over wine, having friendly relationships with women; these are not wrong in themselves, but to the common man, who is spiteful and more ready to rebuke than to submit, they offer matter for adverse suspicion and adverse talk. For this reason Paul does not admit to the office of bishop a man who, upon the death of a wife whom he had married before his baptism, married another woman after his baptism:[168] not because there is any wrong or blame here but because, since modesty wins a teacher the greatest authority, the second marriage offers some suspicion of incontinence. It is not remarkable if a man who has not experienced the unhappiness of wedlock aims at marriage and if someone who desires children and heirs seeks a wife with honourable motive; but, just as the comic poet says that 'It is shameless for one who is shipwrecked a second time to blame Neptune,'[169] so a man who seeks marriage again after experiencing wedlock and having children is somehow admitting his own incontinence; thus there is a danger of his marrying a third or a fourth wife and becoming a subject of humour and talk among the people without doing anything wrong (even among the pagans a plurality of wives always had a bad reputation) or of his hunting a cure for his incontinence in other men's wives if his own grows tiresome. Paul, in fact, instructs all Christians to refrain from every appearance of evil,[170] since in those days the novelty and rarity of Christians had the gaze

* * * * *

167 Cf Matt 6:24; Luke 16:13. Jesus speaks of Mammon as the personification of greed. Paul says, 'The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil' (1 Tim 6:10).

168 1 Tim 3:2; see *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Timotheum priorem* CWE 44 18–19.

169 Publilius Syrus 331; see also *Adagia* IV V 62.

170 1 Thess 5:22

of the whole world turned upon it as though set upon a stage,[171] and so the wicked life of anyone who professed Christ did no small damage to the gospel; even today, of course, it does no small damage when, with the Christian religion reduced to such straits,[172] our own morals alienate still more from the fellowship of the Catholic church the Turks, Mohammedans, Jews, and other nations who either are completely ignorant of Christ or have embraced him in part. If only in the lands that are avowedly under ecclesiastical jurisdiction there were fewer who are more truly Christians in name than in fact, not to mention the great weakness that is nearly universal.

For these reasons the preacher, as he goes forth to this theatre and draws everyone's eyes upon himself, must be keener of sight than Argus[173] in order not to do through thoughtlessness anything that could diminish the profit of the Lord, who is very eager for this gain but wants it to increase day by day through his servants.[174] In fact, he can raise for himself the sons of Abraham from the very cobblestones of the streets,[175] and no one doubts that he is capable of still greater things than this; but his incomprehensible wisdom had decreed to bestow his gifts upon men through men, and no devout person asks why he so decreed, provided he believes that the author of this plan is infinite wisdom, infinite power, infinite goodness, so that it is wrong to doubt that whatever the Best wills is best, that whatever the Most Wise has determined is most wise, that the Almighty will achieve whatever he has determined howsoever he has determined it. And so the preacher who is in charge of the wealth of such a Lord must be free from all personal concerns and wholly intent upon the profit of him to whom everything is owed.[176]

* * * * *

171 Erasmus might have in mind here the story of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1–11), which is followed by the passage that 'among the people ... none of the rest dared to join them, but the people held them in high esteem ...' (Acts 5:11–13).

172 Erasmus elaborates on this below; see 357–8.

173 This is the mythological creature of one hundred eyes used by Juno to keep watch on Io after Jupiter had her turned into a heifer; Jupiter later ordered Mercury to kill him, and Juno (Saturnia) placed his eyes in the tail feathers of the peacock. See Ovid *Metamorphoses* 1.568–779; Plutarch *Moralia* 93C; *De copia* CWE 24 467; OCD 105.

174 Cf the parable of the talents in Matt 25:15–20 and Luke 19:12–24.

175 Cf Matt 3:9.

176 Cf Matt 25:15–20 and 1 Cor 9:19.

And there is no reason for him to say, 'Shall I teach the unteachable? Shall I labour for the ungrateful? Shall I sing to the deaf?[177] Shall I do good to the wicked?' After all, he who is infinitely greater than you did this, stretched out his hands all his life to an unbelieving and resistant people,[178] and never ceased sowing good seed, though he knew that it would not yield a harvest in everyone's heart.[179] He cultivated a vineyard that instead of sweet grapes brought forth bitter wild ones;[180] why are you slow to do this, when you do not know the outcome of your sowing? The business of casting seed, planting, and watering has been entrusted to you,[181] the outcome is in the hand of God; whatever it is like, he will never fail to reward you for performing in good faith the labour due to the Lord of the farm, though you are only a farmer casting another's seed into another's land.

As the Apostle says, 'The one thing desired in a steward is that he be found faithful.'[182] If among men this is required of those who have undertaken the management of lowly matters, how much more will God require this fidelity of those to whom he has entrusted the management of his mysteries![183] Someone who calls himself a steward knows that he is handling another's property, to be managed for the use of the household according to his master's expressed opinion. If he does not transgress from his lord's commands but completes his assignment zealously and in good faith, his own reward is secure even if what he does fails to succeed; the entire loss is his master's and cannot be imputed to the zealous steward. But if he does not pay out what he has received to pay out, or spends it otherwise than instructed (for each is an equal fault), far from receiving a reward, he will have to be summoned for punishment.[184] 'If I preach the gospel, it is no glory to me,'[185] says Paul: I carry on another's business under the Lord's auspices. I have escaped punishment, not earned praise, if I impart the teaching of the gospel to the Lord's flock only from fear of punishment and under the compulsion of necessity. 'Woe to me,' he says, 'if I do

* * * * *

177 *Adagia* I iv 87
178 Cf Isa 65:2; Rom 10:21.
179 Cf Matt 13:37.
180 Cf Isa 5:1–4.
181 Cf 1 Cor 3:6–9.
182 1 Cor 4:2; cf Luke 12:42–4.
183 Yet another instance of Erasmus' method of argument by comparison by moving from the lesser to the greater.
184 Cf Luke 12:35–48; Matt 24:45–51.
185 1 Cor 9:16

not preach the gospel! For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if otherwise, I am entrusted with a commission.'[186] But who is it who serves willingly as a steward? He who eagerly, who urgently, who not from a love of reward but from an impulse of charity strives with all his might either to draw the greatest number of people to Christ with soft and comforting words, or to drive them to him with threats and accusations, or to lead them to him through instruction; he rejoices no less in his Lord's profit than in his own, if indeed we have any property of our own, we who are the servants of Christ[187] in more ways than one, being first created by him, then redeemed by him, from whose unselfish munificence comes whatever we possess or are.

The management of a household's property used to be entrusted to the slaves who seemed to surpass the rest in intelligence and trustworthiness, and Holy Writ rejoices in designating the ecclesiastical teacher with this term. Thus Paul, speaking about the church, which is the house of God,[188] says, 'of which I became a minister according to the dispensation of the grace of God, which was given to me among you, in order that I might fulfil the word of God,'[189] and again elsewhere, 'if you have heard the dispensation of the grace of God, which was given to me among you.'[190] However, describing to Titus the image of the good teacher, he says, 'A bishop, as God's steward, must be blameless, not arrogant, not quick-tempered, not a drunkard, not violent.'[191] And yet among men the mightier the luminaries they serve, the haughtier are their stewards. Of course man cheats man, and sometimes someone who is treacherous is taken for faithful, but no one can cheat God, who examines the recesses of the heart.[192] In addition, powerful men sometimes fear their own stewards because they are intimate with all their domestic affairs, and sometimes they are overthrown by them; but no one can either deceive or harm God, and no one can escape his vengeance, though here faithless stewards often take to flight seeking safety for themselves. But where will you run to escape the hand of God?[193] 'If you ascend

* * * * *

186 1 Cor 9:16–17
187 1 Cor 9:19
188 Col 1:24; cf Matt 16:18.
189 Col 1:25
190 Eph 3:2
191 Titus 1:7
192 Rom 8:27; 1 Cor 2:10, 14:25; Ps 7:10; Jer 17:10; cf Augustine *Confessions* 3.6.11: 'You though were more inward to me than my most inward self and higher to me than my highest' (*Tu autem eras interior intimo meo et superior summo meo*).
193 Wisd of Sol 16:15; Tob 13:2

to heaven, he is there; if you descend to hell, he is there too.'[194] There is then no reason why any steward under such a Lord should grow proud and arrogant. If you want to be safe, recognize that you are only the manager of another's property, and, the greater you are among men by the dignity of your office, the more humbly you should conduct yourself, not as a huckster but as an honest dealer in the word of God; but if you want to have praise, feed the flock[195] of your Lord with zeal and joy out of the abundance of charity, spending much above what necessity compels you. And so the Apostle liked the title of steward,[196] which urges modesty, deters pride, reminds one of the good faith that is due.

So too St Peter says, '. . . as every man has received grace, administering to you in turn, like good stewards of the manifold grace of God.'[197] But to understand that the title of steward is being emphasized in order to deter arrogance, listen to what follows soon after in Peter: 'Whoever speaks, let him speak as if speaking the words of God; whoever serves, let him serve as if from the strength that God supplies, in order that God may be glorified in everything through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and dominion for ever and ever, amen.'[198]

Again Paul, writing to the Corinthians, says, 'Let a man regard us as ministers of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries.'[199] That heavenly soul was content with the title of minister and steward.

In Luke a gospel parable presents an image of the faithful and the faithless teacher under the appellation of steward ('Who do you think is the faithful and wise steward' etc)[200] and calls 'blessed'[201] the one who performs his duty; the other – who has played tyrant instead of servant and starves those he had undertaken to feed with his master's grain and, not content with this, shows his rage in abusive language and beatings against his fellow servants, male and female, while he himself is well filled with food and drink – is cut into two parts when his master returns sooner than expected and is assigned to the lot of the hypocrites, for a man who behaves differently in his master's absence than in his presence is a hypocrite. Not that

* * * * *

194 Ps 139:7–8 (Vulg 138:7–8)
195 Cf 1 Pet 5:2 and John 21:15–17.
196 'Steward' *dispensator*; Titus 1:7–8; 1 Cor 4:1–2
197 1 Pet 4:10
198 1 Pet 4:11
199 1 Cor 4:1
200 Luke 12:42; Matt 24:45
201 Luke 12:43; Matt 24:46

God is ever absent, but wicked men abuse God's lenience to the point of rashly daring anything, as though he either did not know what men do or left unpunished what is committed against his own commands. If only we saw no ministers of this sort today, πλήκται 'brawlers,' as the Apostle calls them,[202] fierce and rough in rebuke, looking only to wealth, to green and purple caps,[203] more like wolves[204] than like shepherds towards the Lord's flock.

It must be noted that the word of the gospel requires not only good faith but also good judgment in its steward.[205] Good faith belongs to dove-like simplicity, judgment to the caution of a serpent.[206] Good faith is shown by teaching the people only what the Lord has instructed, by everywhere considering sincerely his glory and the good of his holy flock; the role of judgment is to distinguish according to the circumstances of time, place, and person what is to be applied to whom, at what time, and with what discrimination.[207] Consider how Paul, in whom we see that the greatest simplicity was joined with equal judgment, adapts himself to every circumstance, not

* * * * *

202 1 Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7

203 These caps refer to the *galero*, the traditional green hat of Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops, and the red hat of cardinals. See *Concio, sive Merdardus* CWE 40 959 n75.

204 Cf Matt 7:15, 10:16; Luke 10:3; Acts 20:29.

205 Cf Luke 12:42. *Prudentia* is a favourite word of Erasmus and can take on many meanings depending on the context (thoughtfulness, good sense, prudence, discriminating judgment). Here Erasmus uses the word *prudentia*, rendered here as 'good judgment,' though the term includes a number of its other meanings; it conveys the idea that it is the particular virtue of the 'prudent' person to grasp what is fitting in each specific context. He explains this in the next few lines.

206 Cf Matt 10:16.

207 Erasmus introduces the crucial and recurrent theme of accommodation (*accommodare*), 'to speak aptly' (*apte dicere*), which is a product of the preacher's mature judgment, prudence or counsel that looks to 'circumstances of time, place, and person . . .'; it intends what is 'apt' or 'fitting' (*aptum*, *decorum*, τὸ πρέπον) both as regards the relationship of the parts of the speech to each other and the external 'circumstances of time, place and person.' It also looks to the beneficial and honourable (*utilitas et honestas*). Quintilian considers this 'appropriateness of speech' as 'highly necessary'; see Quintilian 11.1 and passim; see also Cicero *Orator* 70–1. Erasmus returns to this idea in *Ecclesiastes*, often denouncing preachers' faults of 'decorum' as the fundamental error in the preaching of his day. In contrast, St Paul, like Jesus, displayed this excellence in his preaching; see below where Erasmus discusses Paul's preaching and letters (280 and book 3 CWE 68 1006–11). See also *Hyperaspistes* 1 CWE 76 209: 'There was nothing so recondite in Scripture that he [Paul] could not accommodate to proving the gospel.'

always pondering what is allowed but what is expedient,[208] how he at times abases himself,[209] then how he exalts his sublimity in Christ.[210] Sometimes he exercises his apostolic power and threatens the rod of severity,[211] but more often he implores, cajoles, and shows himself more a mother and nurse than an apostle.[212] Sometimes he scolds,[213] then mitigates[214] something that could seem too harshly spoken; some things he defers and puts off to say at a more convenient time.[215] How circumspectly he invites to counsel and perfection,[216] careful all the while not to lay a snare for anyone;[217] sometimes he does not have a commandment of the Lord, but he has nevertheless a useful counsel,[218] like a faithful steward. How cleverly he adapts the witness of Scripture to his present case; how wisely he opens the cloud of allegory when the letter has little significance for piety.[219] Among the perfected he speaks of wisdom hidden in secret;[220] among the weak he knows only Jesus Christ and him crucified.[221] He has milk with which to nourish children; he has solid food to offer adults.[222] He dares resist Peter, chief of the apostles, to his face,[223] supplicates Philemon, and pledges himself as surety for him to welcome back the runaway slave Onesimus.[224] Acting against those who assigned more than was right to the Mosaic rituals, he so exalts faith in Christ and the grace of the gospel in his words that he seems to neglect works of charity;[225] again, challenging those who were not renewing their life because they thought it sufficient to have been baptized and to profess

* * * * *

208 1 Cor 6:12, 10:23
209 Eg 1 Cor 15:9; 2 Cor 11:7, 12:7–11
210 Eg 1 Cor 15:10
211 1 Cor 4:21; 2 Cor 13:2
212 1 Cor 4:14; 2 Cor 6:13; Gal 4:19; 1 Thess 2:7–8
213 Rom 2:5–6
214 2 Cor 7:3
215 Cf 1 Cor 3:1–3.
216 Eg 1 Cor 7:25–40
217 Cf 1 Cor 7:35.
218 Eg 1 Cor 7:25
219 See for example 1 Cor 9:9–10, 10:1–11. See book 3 passim for Erasmus' treatment of allegory.
220 1 Cor 2:6–16
221 1 Cor 2:2
222 1 Cor 3:2
223 Gal 2:11; see Paul's report of this in Galatians 2.
224 Philemon; cf Col 4:9 where he is spoken of by Paul as 'a most beloved and faithful brother.' See *Paraphrasis ad Philemonem* CWE 44 69–74.
225 Galatians 3. Here Erasmus gently criticizes the Reformers' position on *sola fides*; below Erasmus will reiterate his position on 'faith and charity'; see book 3 CWE 68 1019–20.

the name of Christ, he urges them to works of devotion, preferring charity to all gifts, even faith,[226] of which he so often speaks so splendidly.[227] When talking at Athens before the Areopagus, he takes his exordium from an inscription on an altar and cites the witness of Callimachus,[228] a most elegant but pagan poet, speaking of Christ in such a way that he calls him a man only;[229] but when he writes to those who had already received the teaching of the gospel, how sublime and full of divine majesty is everything that he says about Christ.[230] In the course of accommodating himself to everyone, then, he is so variable that he sometimes appears to be self-contradictory and to speak inconsistencies,[231] though he is everywhere quite consistent with himself; but this is the good judgment of the faithful steward and manager,[232] as it were, of heaven's rich store.

With like judgment the Lord forbids that which is holy to be given to dogs and pearls to be cast before swine,[233] speaking to the people in parables which he sometimes did not trouble to explain to his closest disciples;[234] and after the resurrection he entrusted the grace of the gospel to them for dispensation in such a way that they preached first at Jerusalem, then in Samaria, finally among the nations to the ends of the earth.[235]

Finally, what does the Scripture of the Old Testament present to us, as it tempers its speech to the emotions of an unlearned people, now threatening external discomforts, now promising the comfort of this world, if not an example of the thoughtful steward? Now, if we reflect how much variety of sex, age, condition, intelligence, opinion, lifestyle, custom exists within the same population, clearly a preacher must be endowed with great

* * * * *

226 1 Cor 13:1–13
227 See especially Romans 5.
228 Callimachus; see book 3 CWE 68 1009 n1715.
229 Acts 17:22–3, 16–34; see *Paraphrasis in acta apostolorum* CWE 50 107–111. Erasmus analyses Paul's speech in book 3 CWE 68 1006–11. For Folly's view of Paul citing the words of the Greek poets in Acts 17, see *Moria* CWE 27 145.
230 Eg Phil 2:6–11; Col 1:15–20; Ephesians 1
231 Cf Rom 3:4 and 1 Cor 13:2; Rom 3:31 and Gal 5:2–4.
232 'Steward and manager' (*promus condus*) is a rare word, or rather two words: *promus* 'one who takes out of storage,' and *condus* 'one who puts back into storage.' Erasmus has borrowed it from comedy, where it refers to the slave in charge of stores of food and wine (cf Plautus *Pseudolus* 608); hence the subsequent apologetic 'as it were.' Cf Matt 24:45, 25:21, 23.
233 Matt 7:6
234 Matthew 13
235 Acts 1:8

judgment.[236] For he must so temper his speech that he does not give to some a handle for error while healing the errors of others, or teach vice while denouncing vice, or arouse sedition while boldly denouncing crime. Rhetoricians say that no one speaks well unless he speaks appropriately,[237] even though he also speaks elaborately, eloquently, and splendidly, and they demand that the rules of art should yield to good sense, which they divide into *iudicium* [judgment] and *consilium* [discretion], skills that cannot be imparted by instruction but are derived from the orator's intelligence and are adopted from the circumstances of the case.[238]

They deem, however, that there is not so much difference between *iudicium* and *consilium* – and no wonder, since to the ancients the verb *consulere* meant 'to decide,' hence the *consulta*, 'the decisions' of the Senate and also, if I am not mistaken, the title *consuls*.[239] Now, if there is any difference, it is that we apply 'judgment' to what is obvious and plain but use 'discretion' in more uncertain and doubtful matters which are sometimes brought in from far outside the case. For example, the art of rhetoric has instructed you to use an exordium to prepare the mind of your listener before the case, but the orator, after considering the circumstances of the case, sees that he should either forgo the exordium completely or make it through 'insinuation.'[240] That you may call judgment. But the fact that Cicero preferred to shorten his speaking time against Verres,[241] even though it otherwise served

* * * * *

236 Erasmus returns to the most important skills of the preacher, above all that of 'thoughtfulness' or 'prudence' or 'discretion,' which is central to accommodation; see n205 above.

237 Cf Quintilian 11.1.1–2: 'The appropriateness of speech (*ut dicamus apte*), which Cicero shows to be the fourth department of style, and which is, in my opinion, highly necessary.' Erasmus returns to this in book 3 CWE 68 1018.

238 Both judgment and discretion are the two components of *prudentia*, which here is often rendered as 'judgment.' The distinction between 'judgment' (*iudicium*) and 'discretion' (*consilium*) is explained by Quintilian 6.5.4. The former deals with evident facts; *consilium* is more a matter of strategy and tact, which takes into account the general circumstances of the case. It is difficult to find suitable English equivalents that fit all uses of these terms in this passage. See Quintilian 6.5.2–11 and 11.1.1–93; Cicero *Orator* 70–1.

239 On the derivation of *consul* from *consulo*, see Quintilian 1.6.32; OCD 286 *consul*.

240 'Insinuation' is a technical term in rhetoric meaning an indirect way of introducing a speech with the aim of gaining the favour of the judges. See Quintilian 4.1.41–50 and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.4.6, 1.6.9–10.

241 Erasmus refers to Cicero's oration *In Verrem* (70 BC) but is following Quintilian 6.5.4. For Cicero's reasons for shortening his opening address, see L.H.G.

the building of his case to draw it out, rather than fall into the year in which Hortensius was going to be consul, since the authority of a consul as advocate would have helped Verres' case – that is considered an example of *consilium*. But it is enough for now to have touched on this briefly; an opportunity to say more will be given when we arrive at technical instruction.[242] Without judgment, however, the precepts of the art are so useless that some have thought that rhetoric is precisely judgment in speaking.[243]

But good judgment, though it is strengthened by both instruction and practice, nevertheless comes from nature above all; hence that true saying that the art of speaking is learned either quickly or never.[244] If that natural judgment is present, precepts are recognized rather than learned; if it is not present, art makes us speak worse and more tiresomely. Just as none reason more ineptly than those who are naturally slow and have learned dialectic by rote, so too none speak more ineptly than those who religiously observe the rhetoricians' instructions without Minerva's favour,[245] as the saying goes, for often the greatest art is to neglect art.[246] Since men of this world seek good judgment in cases of this world, how much more should it be required in a preacher; there one man's farm or rank is lost through an orator's lack of judgment, here countless souls are in danger.

Consider now, please, how dangerous it is when young men are admitted indiscriminately into the pulpit, who are sometimes more than half foolish by nature, with no experience of practical affairs, no judgment, trained neither in secular nor in sacred literature, sometimes (as we have not infrequently seen) laden with food and drink, and even if there is no hangover darkening their mental vigour, all that they bring to their speaking is their clerical garb and their impudence. I have heard some preachers who were already so close to obvious delirium that they were abandoned by their congregation in derision.[247] It is not enough, therefore, to know what must

* * * * *

Greenwood's introduction to *Cicero: The Verrine Orations* I Loeb Classical Library 221 (Cambridge, Mass and London 1928; repr 1989) ix–xix.

242 See book 2 CWE 68 510–37.

243 'judgment in speaking' (*dicendi prudentiam*); cf Cicero *Ad Brutum* 6.23: 'For no one can be a good speaker who is not a sound thinker.' See also *De oratore* 3.14.55; Quintilian 2.20.12–17.

244 Cicero *De oratore* 3.36.146

245 For 'without Minerva's favour,' see *Adagia* I i 42 (CWE 31 91, especially n42).

246 Cf *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.7.10; Cicero *Orator* 23.78; *De oratore* 2.41.177; Quintilian 4.1.56–7 and 4.2.58–60.

247 The impact of Erasmus' treatise relies partly on bringing to light the faults of contemporary preachers, as he does throughout. See above n13; see also *Moria*

be said unless you consciously distinguish when, before whom, how, with what words, in what order, with what figures, with what facial expression, with what gestures it must be said. This kind of good judgment[248] is so important that the same case earns applause if pleaded by one man, is hissed off if pleaded by another. Yet I do not deny that in a sacred orator judgment is a gift of the Holy Spirit;[249] but that Spirit tempers its force according to the organ that it has found, especially now that miracles have all but ceased,[250] so that a future preacher not only needs to be trained but also must be chosen for his obvious fitness for the office. No one is unaware that God can give a human voice even to a she-ass,[251] but no one would train as a preacher a person short of breath, with a poor voice or weak lungs or a hesitant and stumbling tongue, or someone of exceptional ugliness with no memory. But these flaws, which can still be repaired in part because they are external, affect us more strongly, while we overlook mental stolidity, poverty of judgment, anger, intemperance, stupidity, a runny and sieve-like memory, and other faults of this kind because they are not immediately obvious to the eye, though there is far more weight in the latter than in the former. St Chrysostom has much to say on this; he constantly draws attention to the good judgment and tactics of St Paul;[252] the Holy

* * * * *

CWE 27 132–5; *Colloquia* (*Concio, sive Merdardus*) CWE 40 938–62; and *Ciceronianus* CWE 28 384–5 for Bulephorus' disgust with a sermon at the papal court. But see especially John O'Malley who observes that Erasmus' judgment on the quality of the sermons at the papal court was 'simply wrong' (*Praise and Blame* 30–1).

248 Latin *prudentia*

249 Cf Acts 2:4. Erasmus raises the complicated theological question here of the Holy Spirit's activity in assisting the preacher. Though he never analyzes this matter in *Ecclesiastes*, he provides numerous ways of considering what must be taken as a given; for even in the most deplorable situations, one cannot deny that the Holy Spirit is not somehow at work, as his example of Balaam's she-ass demonstrates (see Numbers 22).

250 Erasmus expresses his view that, after Jesus' earthly ministry and the age of the apostles, Christ's work continues in the church through the ministry of preaching; and for this God uses each preacher according to his nature and capacity. This treatise aims at identifying those who 'seem fitted by nature for this office' and providing direction.

251 See Num 22:28 where 'the Lord opened the mouth of the [Balaam's] ass . . .'

252 See eg John Chrysostom *De incomprehensibili dei natura homiliae* 1–5 PG 48 701–48; *On the Incomprehensible Nature of God* trans Paul W. Harkins FOC 72, *Homily* I 51–2, *Homily* V 137–8; *Homily* XXXIV (Acts 15.35) NPNF 1st series 11 212–19; *Homily* XXIX (1 Cor 12:1–2) NPNF 1st series 12 168–75.

Spirit did not take away this power, which was inborn in him by nature, but perfected it.[253]

The chief qualities[254] to be sought in a preacher are that he have a heart clean of all vices and human desires; that he have a life blameless and free not only from wrongdoing but also from any suspicion or appearance of wrongdoing; that he have a spirit strong, adamantine, and unshakeable against all of Satan's tricks; that he have a mind fiery and burning to benefit everyone; that he have the wisdom to season the folly of the people; that he have a wise and keen intelligence to distinguish readily what must be kept silent, what spoken, and before whom, at what time, in what way his speech should be adjusted: someone who, with Paul, knows how to change his voice and become all things to all people,[255] whenever he sees that this is expedient[256] for the salvation of his audience. For this should be the sole target to which the preacher directs all his considerations; if you deflect your gaze from it, the better trained you have been in speaking, the greater the danger you bring upon the Lord's flock. A voluble tongue, a melodious quill,[257] strong lungs, faithful memory, knowledge of Scripture are only wine blended with hemlock if sincerity of heart is absent, for this mixture makes the poison more potent. Therefore, as I began to say before, just as the most abundant profit comes to the church from devout preachers, so the greatest danger comes from wicked ones. But this outstanding ability is not given by man to man, and no one gives it to himself; it must be sought from God, and not only sought urgently in prayers but also solicited by pious works.[258]

* * * * *

253 See eg John Chrysostom *Homily* XXIX (1 Cor 12:1–2) for the idea of the Spirit perfecting our natural talents (NPNF 1st series 12 168–75).

254 Erasmus summarizes the qualities desirable in the preacher; cf Quintilian 1.Pr.9: 'My aim, then, is the education of the perfect orator. The first essential for such an one is that he should be a good man, and consequently we demand of him not merely the possession of exceptional gifts of speech, but of all the excellences of character as well.'

255 1 Cor 9:22

256 Cf 1 Cor 6:12. The rhetorical idea of 'the expedient' or 'beneficial' (*utilitas*), like 'the honourable' (*honestas*), falls under the category of 'the appropriate' (*aptum*); both go hand in hand in preaching.' See below books 3 and 4 passim. See also Quintilian 11.1.8–9: 'Whatever is becoming is, as a rule, useful . . .'; he concedes however that if the two are at variance 'expediency must yield to the demands of what is becoming.'

257 For the image of the tongue as a *plectrum* 'quill,' see 258–9 n61 above.

258 Another instance of Erasmus distancing himself from Luther's theology.

There are however two kinds of good works, of which one is akin to ceremonies and pertains to bodily exercise[259] (I gladly use Paul's term), the other bears more upon spiritual devotion. Of the former sort are abstention from the richer foods, frequent fasting, sleeping upon the ground, vigils, hair shirts, humble dress, enduring heat and cold, long prayers, the requirement to live according to a man's prescriptions, and other things like these that in a way bridle the flesh, which in a preacher should be vigorously tamed and subdued and, as Paul says, 'reduced to servitude'[260] to prevent it rampaging against the spirit. Of the latter sort are those with which that excellent fashioner of disciples[261] especially trained his own followers and from which a good tree is especially known.[262] And what are these? That the mind be strengthened and fortified against anger and hate, against desire for vengeance, against all human vainglory and shame alike, and against all the spiritual tricks with which Satan often casts down even outstanding men. Hence the preacher, before he enters this theatre, should particularly reflect upon the following: first, that he be poor in spirit,[263] opposed to all empty glory,[264] not hunting praise from men here but content with what the Lord promised when he said, 'For of such as these is the kingdom of heaven'; next, that he be meek in face of all the injuries of the wicked,[265] not regarding the prizes of this world but ignoring them all and hastening to the recompense that Christ promises to such men when he affirms that they will possess the earth, not this one that we hold in common with cattle and snakes but that solid and unchangeable, blessed immortality. And let him not think that it is enough to strengthen his mind so that he neither demands glory from men for his deserts nor seeks vengeance for his injuries, unless he remains keen even in affliction, content with the solace of the Spirit whose kindness even here sometimes softens the bitterness of temptations so that they can be borne until the coming of the joy that is soured by no bitterness of pain.[266] Let him hunger, let him thirst in this life for righteousness

* * * * *

259 Cf 1 Tim 4:8.
260 1 Cor 9:27
261 Ie Christ.
262 Matt 12:33; Luke 6:44
263 Matt 5:3. Erasmus' description of these excellent qualities in the preacher coincides with the beatitudes preached by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:1–12); Erasmus finds the embodiment of these qualities in Paul.
264 Gal 5:26; Phil 2:3
265 Matt 5:5
266 Matt 5:4

alone:[267] that is, let him desire the widest possible advancement of the fruit of gospel piety, in the knowledge that he will soon be satisfied to fullness with a heavenly banquet and the new wine that is drunk in the kingdom of heaven. It is a lofty soul that is touched by no desire for glory, is moved from its mental tranquillity by no human effrontery, is not only not dejected in exile, pillage, prison, torture, and death but remains ever eager, partly from the security of a good conscience, partly from the expectation of eternal happiness, and is slowed by no allurements or bogies of human life from the course of devotion and a most fervent zeal to help all mankind; but it is a loftier mind that returns good will for ill will, a friendly word for abuse, blessings for curses. At this point someone might say, 'Everyone knows that; give us something new.' I am aware that these sentiments are daily sung in the churches, recited in the monasteries, heard in sermons, read in the gospels; but those who practise these often-heard ideas carefully and conscientiously are, alas, too rare, though in fact it is these things that make a preacher truly great like the apostles, while it is possible to see not a few who conduct themselves diligently in the former sort. You may find many who are pale from eating beans and fish, wasted from fasting, worn out with vigils and toil, shabby in humble clothes, scarred from hard bedding and hair shirts; but how few you will find to preach the gospel without recompense, to bear insults calmly, to overcome their tormenter with kindness when provoked by an insult. This of course is the devotion that St Paul preaches is useful for everything, while exercising of the body produces little of use:[268] little, however, not in an absolute sense (let no one think that what tames the wantonness of the flesh should be neglected); they have little utility if they are not applied as though in a subordinate capacity to those proofs of true devotion, but considerable utility if they aim at this and prepare for it. Someone who leads an austere and ascetic life only in order to become accustomed to being content with little is accomplishing nothing of significance (philosophers who did not know Christ did the same); but someone who trains his body to endurance in order not to delay his spirit's rush towards those sublime duties of evangelical devotion is accomplishing something exceedingly useful.[269] Four things, however, should be avoided: haughtiness, superstition, perverse judgment, and neglect of moderation.

We see that both in the past and today people are most puffed up by those external tokens of righteousness that win favour in the sight of men.

* * * * *

267 Matt 5:6
268 'The devotion' (*pietas*); 1 Tim 4:8
269 Cf Phil 3:12–14; 1 Cor 9:24–7.

Superstition enters unseen in various ways, for instance when these things are observed in a Judaic spirit[270] (as if a kind of food of itself purifies or taints a man),[271] or when a man prescribes these things for himself not for use but for some superstitious feeling, just as there used to be some who in place of wine and water sipped (rather than drank) the juice of herbs, not from a cup but from a shell, though it is both simpler and more useful to drink plain water instead of wine. And it was not without superstition that some used to count their days of fasting, for three days, for a week, for forty days, sometimes for a whole lifetime; for fasting is not to be applied in accordance with a specified number, as in magic, but in accordance with what is useful to body and soul. Hence those who fast in this way behave no less foolishly than those who drain their cups not according to the measure of their thirst but to a specified number, now five, now three, now nine, when everyone should drink as much as suffices for slaking the thirst.

Errors are made through perverse judgment whenever more importance is assigned to what is of lesser moment and less to what is more pertinent to a subject. It is unnecessary to give examples of this since they are apparent everywhere, yet I shall point out one to clarify what I am saying. Many are deeply troubled if they have accidentally tasted meat on a Friday;[272] but the same people are not offended with themselves if by their slanders they have harmed the reputation of a neighbour and caused him sorrow. They tremble pathetically if they have had occasion to put off their sacred garment, but they do not tremble if through drunkenness, greed, hatred, envy they have cast off the white robe of the soul that Christ gave them in baptism and put on the black garb of Satan.

But perhaps not many err in this way since the mass of humanity is more drawn to the sweet than to the bitter. Here too, however, significant errors are committed, sometimes even by great men, Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus among them, if it is true, as the latter relates, that each of them had brought ill health upon himself by fasts, drinking water, vigils, bedding on the ground, and other extreme forms of austerity; the result was that for Basil life was bitter and death desirable, while Gregory was compelled to resign the office of bishop because he lacked the physical strength to carry out a bishop's duties.[273] St Jerome does not hide

* * * * *

270 Erasmus opposes the spirit and the letter, as does Paul (1 Cor 8:8, 10:25–6); see eg *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 188.

271 Cf Matt 15:10–20; Mark 7:14–23.

272 Cf *De esu carnium* ASD IX-1 19–50.

273 Basil, bishop of Caesarea (c 329–79), one of the four doctors of the Eastern

the fact that among monks there were some who so damaged their health by the dampness of their cells, continual recitation of the Psalms, and excessive fasting that they had greater need of Hippocrates' poultices than of his own teaching.[274] In fact I myself know many others whom an excessively austere lifestyle has rendered useless for every important function, and in particular a certain theologian, a man otherwise good and uncommonly learned, who, after receiving his doctorate in theology at Paris, was given a canonry (or a preacher's prebend,[275] as they now call it) in a busy cathedral church; but this devout man determined, despite his change in station, to relax none of the former austerity in which he had trained. Within a few years he became so disabled that he contracted leprosy.[276] I know another[277] too who suddenly changed his habits when called from poverty to a similar station and began to feast, to pursue wealth, to keep a mistress, to stir rebellion against the bishop by whom he had been elevated, being scarcely tolerable even to the prince's court because of his arrogance. Each erred, the former with more honourable appearance than the latter, but the fruit of devotion withered in each alike, except that it did so still more in the former.[278] But there is a middle way between Scylla and Charybdis.[279] In the past it was those especially who were commended by the austerity of the life they led that were often summoned to the bishop's chair from the deserts in which the troops of monks led their harsh life,[280] for the unenlightened

* * * * *

church, along with John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus (329/30–389/90), 'the Theologian,' and Gregory of Nyssa (c 330–c 395). For Basil's austerities and condition, see Gregory of Nazianzus *Oration* 43 (*Panegyric on Saint Basil*) NPNF 2nd series 7 415. For Gregory of Nazianzus, see his *Oration* 42 (*The Last Farewell*) NPNF 2nd series 7 392; for John Chrysostom, see J.N.D. Kelly *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom, Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (Ithaca 1995) 32–4, 113, 118–9.

274 See Jerome Ep 125.16 NPNF 2nd series 6 249–50.

275 An income or a stipend for a canon or college member that derives from the revenue of a cathedral or collegiate church.

276 Erasmus does not disclose the identity of this individual. Chomarat (ASD V-4 73 804n) notes it is impossible to determine what illness 'leprosy' (*lepra*) means here.

277 Erasmus does not disclose the identify of this individual.

278 The translator has rendered the literal meaning of Erasmus' text, which reads: . . . *nisi quod magis etiam in priore*. Erasmus, perhaps in haste, wrote 'former' (*priore*) instead of 'latter' (*posteriore*).

279 See n106 above.

280 On monks' life in late antiquity, see Jerome Epp 22.7, 34, 125.7–17 NPNF 2nd series 6 24–5, 37, 240–50.

multitude judges godliness mostly according to these things. But St Chrysostom frankly confesses that it often happens that those who have been called to the role of bishop from that kind of life are found to be more inept than others, as they give way to pleasure, swell up at the praise and flattery of men, are upset even by minor wrongs, are difficult to approach, sullen and harsh, unfit for every one of life's experiences, too bitter in reprimanding vices;[281] while St Ambrose, though he was not yet reborn in the sacred bath,[282] showed himself by turns a gentle, hardworking, strong, constant, and unwavering priest when he was called from the secular prefecture to the office of bishop.[283] As to the conduct of Chrysostom, who was summoned from the law courts,[284] or of Augustine[285] and Cyprian,[286] who were summoned not from anchorites' cells but from the schools of rhetoric and everyday life to guide the church, the facts speak for themselves.

I am not saying this as though persons to whom the office of teaching the people may rightly be entrusted cannot be summoned from retreats and monasteries (of course truly spiritual minds are found there as well), but in order to show how different is the training given by John the Baptist and that of our Lord Jesus Christ. The former, as he prepared his disciples for their evangelical mission, prescribed fasts, long prayers, a spare and austere diet, being himself a child of the forests, companion of the beasts, with a robe woven not from wool but from camel hair, which would surpass the roughness even of a hair shirt, girt not with a sash of silk or linen but a

* * * * *

281 See John Chrysostom *Treatise concerning the Christian Priesthood* (*De sacerdotio*) book 6 NPNF 1st series 9 74–83; PG 48 623–92.

282 Ie baptism.

283 See *Vita sancti Ambrosii* 41–5; Ambrose *De officiis* (*On the Duties of the Clergy*) 1.1.4 CCSL 15, NPNF 2nd series 10 1; Ambrose *De paenitentia* (*On Repentence*) 2.8.72 CSEL 73 117, SC 179, NPNF 2nd series 10 354. See Neil B. McLynn *Ambrose of Milan: Church and Court in a Christian Capital* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1994) especially chapter 1 'The Reluctant Bishop' 1–52.

284 See Chrysostom *On the Priesthood* 1.4 NPNF 1st series 9 33–4.

285 Augustine of Hippo (d 432), bishop, gives an account of this in his *Confessions*; see especially books 1–9. Erasmus draws on much of Augustine's teaching on rhetoric and Scripture in *De doctrina christiana*; see book 3 passim.

286 Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, former teacher of rhetoric and martyr (d 258), known for his eloquence in championing the rebaptism of schismatics who had lapsed during the persecution of Decian. Erasmus mentions Augustine and Cyprian again below in a similar passage; see 325. See *The Life and Passion of Cyprian, Bishop and Martyr* 2 ANF V 267; see also J. Patout Burns *Cyprian the Bishop* (London 2002). Erasmus published the works of Cyprian; see *Opera divi Caecilii Cypriani episcopi Carthaginensis* . . . (Basel: Johann Froben 1520).

plain thong; if you are wondering about his diet, he fed on locusts and drank water,[287] and yet they envy the glory of this disciple of Christ and disparage his disciples. And what of Christ? He found fault neither with John nor his training[288] but inculcated in his disciples above all that they should place all their faith in him, scorn the world with all its delights or terrors, and through disgrace, affliction, and death seek their heavenly reward. This of course is the power of faith; the qualities of charity are that they should be so cleansed of anger, hate, envy, vindictiveness, and ambition that when provoked with evil they return good, love their enemies; that they should show equal benevolence to the worthy and the unworthy; that the greater they are, the more they should lower themselves to everyone in the love of Christ. 'But the disciples of Christ fled and hid when the Lord was seized and killed,'[289] you will say; 'one[290] denied him, and the others would have done the same had a like temptation occurred.' But this was before they had breathed in the principal Spirit[291] and under the duress of sudden fear, which often leaves even strong men senseless. Probably some among John's disciples shouted, 'Take him, take him; crucify him, crucify him';[292] fearing an evil that appears suddenly and inflicting death upon an innocent man are two quite different things. These things did not happen by chance, but a model for imitation was presented to us in them.

John's teaching was just like his baptism. Those who had been washed with John's baptism are baptized anew in the name of Jesus (Acts 19);[293] those who had been imbued with John's teaching need more precise teaching (as at Acts 18).[294] Though Apollo of Alexandria[295] had been taught the way of the Lord by John's disciples, spoke at Corinth burning in the Spirit, taught carefully those things that are God's, and conducted himself in the synagogue with great confidence, he is nevertheless taken away by Priscilla and Aquila and made a pupil instead of a teacher; he learns the way of the Lord more accurately and precisely and probably was rebaptized as well.

* * * * *

287 See Matt 3:1–4; Mark 1:2–8; Luke 3:1–20.
288 Matt 11:7–15; Luke 7:24–35; cf Matt 9:14; Mark 2:18; Luke 5:33.
289 Cf Matt 26:56; Mark 14:50; Luke 23:49.
290 Ie Peter; see Matt 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:55–62; John 18:25–7.
291 Acts 2:2–4
292 See John 19:6; Luke 23:21; Mark 15:13–14; Matt 27:22–3.
293 Acts 19:1–5
294 Acts 18:24–8
295 See Acts 18:24–6. Apollo seems to have known only the teaching and baptism of John the Baptist; he was educated by Priscilla and Aquila at Ephesus and then preached at Corinth. See 1 Cor 3:4–6; see also ODCC 86–7.

And in the next chapter the twelve disciples[296] whom Paul finds at Ephesus, who had been washed only in John's baptism, admit frankly, upon being asked by the Apostle whether they had received the Holy Spirit, that they had never even learned that there is a Holy Spirit. Not only do they learn of this Spirit from Christ's disciple, but they also receive it.[297] Let us too, like true and proper disciples of Christ, not be led by perverse judgment but recognize the gulf between the rudiments of devotion and the heavenly philosophy, between the beginning and the culmination, between the founding and the completion; and let us not neglect them through considerations of the moment but hasten with all our heart to the more excellent way that the Lord himself has paved, so that we may finish as heralds of the word such as the apostles were, becomingly adorned on the outside with modesty, sobriety, fasting, vigils, constant prayers, alms, and other good works, but strong on the inside and fortified by the might of the spirit of the gospel. The latter is the soul's sap, the former, so to speak, its flowers and leaves. In the mystical Song,[298] the bride hears the words, 'If you do not know yourself, O beautiful among women, depart and go after the flocks of your companions.'[299] Let the preacher believe that the same has been spoken to his soul: 'If you do not know the role you have taken on, do not be leader of the Lord's flock but rather follow the herdsmen.' The office that you undertake is by far the most difficult, but also much the most glorious.[300] We have already said a great deal about each aspect.

But, to review the same passages, divine Scripture declares openly at Daniel 12 the greatness of the preacher's rank and how much it differs from other functions: 'Those who are learned shall shine like the splendour of the firmament, and those who train many to justice like stars for everlasting eternities.'[301] The firmament itself has much light, but the stars shine conspicuously in it; these differ among themselves in brightness, as the Apostle teaches.[302] The source of all light is the sun, which brightens the whole world by itself, while different stars are visible to or hidden from different

* * * * *

296 Acts 19:7
297 Acts 19:1–7
298 The Song of Songs or The Song of Solomon
299 Song of Sol 1:8
300 Erasmus frequently repeats this theme that the office of the preacher is the most difficult; see eg 365 below: 'The office of preacher, then is very difficult but also very beautiful; the contest is no ordinary one, but the prizes are outstanding.'
301 Dan 12:3
302 See 1 Cor 15:41.

regions; among the lesser stars, moreover, the one with the greatest and most pleasing light is Hesperus, which we also call Venus and Lucifer.[303] I think that all who have believed in the gospel are called 'learned'[304] here; for why should they be called unlearned when from the Apostles' Creed they have learned, if nothing else, that transcendent philosophy[305] that not Pythagoras or Plato but the Son of God himself imparted to mankind, when they know the precepts of both laws, when they have been taught by Christ how they ought to pray, by what path they should strive towards what goal of happiness? How do those who have not learned this believe? On what pretext can those who have learned it and believe be called unlearned and seem to deserve the appellation 'rustic'? If we are willing to admit the truth, there is no holy rusticity, just as there is no rustic holiness; wherever there is true holiness, there is great wisdom and uncommon learning.[306] Yet among these outstandingly learned ones, the ones that excel are those who by the special munificence of the Spirit have received the gift of training many towards righteousness,[307] who have received from the Lord a heart clean in every way,[308] the principal and unconquerable spirit, a serpent's discretion combined with a dove's simplicity,[309] a tongue like the pen of a swiftly writing scribe,[310] lips upon which that persuasive Πειθώ [Persuasion][311] of the

* * * * *

303 Cf Job 38:32 (Vulg *luciferum*, *vesperum*; LXX (Ἑσπερον). See Cicero *De natura deorum* 2.20.53: 'Lowest of the five planets and nearest to the earth is the star of Venus, called in Greek *Phosphorus* (the light-bringer) and in Latin Lucifer when it precedes the sun, but when it follows it *Hesperos*.'

304 Dan 12:3

305 Transcendent philosophy (*ultramundana philosophia*) is another of many variants for Erasmus' 'heavenly philosophy' or 'philosophy of Christ.' Erasmus often gives brief statements of the content of this 'heavenly philosophy'; see eg *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 358: 'What are Christ's whole life, death, and resurrection, if not a very clear mirror of the philosophy of the gospel?'; and 237 n6; see *Paraclesis* in Olin: 'What else is the philosophy of Christ, which He himself calls a rebirth, than the restoration of human nature originally well formed?'; and Ep 1334:252: 'The sum and substance of our religion is peace and concord.' See also Chantraine passim.

306 Cf 1 John 2:20: 'But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and all of you have knowledge.'

307 Dan 12:3; cf Matt 5:20.

308 Ps 51:10 (Vulg 50:12)

309 Matt 10:16

310 Ps 45:1 (Vulg 44:2)

311 For Πειθώ 'Persuasion personified as a goddess,' see Cicero *De oratore* 2.44.187, and as goddess, Hesiod *Works and Days* 73. See also *Ciceronianus* CWE 28 343 and 545 n11.

heathen does not sit but upon which heavenly grace has been poured from the unction of the Spirit.[312] It is only fair, however, that someone who excels others in the honour of his rank should surpass them in his virtues as well, and it is not enough for him to be good among the bad unless he also appears to be better among the good, brighter among the bright. Unhappy is the condition of the state to which that saying of Isaiah applies, 'And as is the people so will be the priest, and as is the slave so will be his master,'[313] etc. The same prophet, however, marvels at the loftiness of preachers when he exclaims, 'Who are these who fly as clouds do, and like doves to their windows?'[314] Clouds fly aloft to moisten the earth below and render it fertile; teachers of the gospel, however, raised up far from earthly desires and near to heaven, imbue the lowly and infertile minds of man with the rain of the heavenly word, so that once the brambles have been torn out they can produce fruits worthy of God. For it is through them particularly that our earth is either fertile or sterile; they fly like clouds, scattering everywhere the grace of the gospel, but they also fly like doves to their cubbyholes, for they nest not upon the ground but in the clefts of lofty rocks; with their perpetual sighs and prayers they summon towards love of the heavenly life all that creep upon the ground. Joel also saw that the fertility of the church comes from these clouds, and he congratulates our earth when he says, 'Fear not, land, be glad and rejoice,'[315] etc, and later, 'Sons of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the Lord your God, for he has given you a teacher of righteousness, and he will make descend upon you the morning rain and the evening rain in the beginning, and the threshing floors will be filled with grain, and the vats will overflow with wine and oil.'[316]

From the same clouds comes 'the dew of Hermon that descends upon Mount Zion,'[317] from mountain to mountain of course, inasmuch as whoever is in the church is on a mountain, but someone who is to pour out the dew of gospel teaching here must be on a higher mountain. That is the mountain called Hermon, from 'dedication.'[318] 'Dedication' is the name given to

* * * * *

312 Cf Acts 2:4; 1 John 2:20.
313 Isa 24:2
314 Isa 60:8
315 Joel 2:21
316 Joel 2:23–4
317 Ps 133:3 (Vulg 132:3)
318 The etymology of *anathemate* 'dedication' is interesting. Erasmus sees the Greek word ἀνάθεμα as coming from ἄνα 'up, above, from above,' etc and τίθημι 'to place,' thus meaning 'from setting aside or suspending': 'Such are the gifts called which dedicated to the gods are hung on the walls and columns of a

those things that are placed on high and preserved with veneration, are no longer touched by human hands and are not offered for common use as being already consecrated to divinity, are looked at only from afar and arouse reverence in those who see them; such ought to be the life of the preacher. In the tales of the poets[319] Prometheus is fixed upon Mount Caucasus and tormented constantly as an eagle gnaws his liver; but on this mountain there is an end to the grief that arises in human hearts over lesser things, as when a man is saddened by the death of a son, another is upset by the loss of money from theft, another by ill health, another by old age, which removes him from pleasures; for whoever professes himself to be a teacher of this heavenly philosophy, provided this indeed is what he teaches, is above all these emotions. It was upon this mountain that Abraham had ascended, who without hesitation, without sighs, with dry eyes sacrificed his only begotten son Isaac,[320] whom he loved: but perhaps there will be an opportunity elsewhere to speak of these mountains, which mystical Scripture mentions often, declaring to us the eminence of their powers. Let my discourse now return to its purpose.

Let the preacher recognize his worth, but let him remember ever and always that whatever is splendid here is the gift of God, not the excellence of man. Among the prophets of the Old Testament, Isaiah is by far the most eloquent, but he recognizes the author of his great office, saying, 'The Lord has given me a learned tongue that I may know how to sustain with a word him that is weary.'[321] I do not deny, and I am not unaware, that this

* * * * *

temple . . .' He gives this explanation in *Annotationes in Lucam* (21.5) ASD VI-5 580: 'Et donis. Ἀναθήμασι. Ea dicuntur dona quae dicata diis suspenduntur in parietibus et columnis templi; cuiusmodi nunc visuntur potissimum iuxta monumenta divorum statuae argenteae, equi aurei, pocula, gemmata, dicta ab ἀναθῆναι, hoc est a seponendo sive suspendendo. Unde et ἀνάθεμα dicitur.' See LSJ 123 ἀνατίθημι for the idea of 'set up as a votive gift, dedicate.' See Jerome *Tractatuum in psalmos series altera* Ps 88:8 CCSL 78 411 209–10 *Hermon anathema interpretatur*; and *In psalmum xxxxi, ad neophytos* PL 40 1203. Augustine gives a different reading; see *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 88:13 CCSL 39 (1228:10–1229:15); and *Exposition 1 of Psalm 88* WSA III-18 283: 'Hermon is interpreted "anathema to him." The light came, and became anathema to him. To whom? To the devil – who else? To the wounded, proud one. By your gift we have been illuminated; by your gift it is that he who once held us prisoners in his error and pride has become anathema to us.'

319 Cf Hesiod *Theogony* 507–616; Aeschylus *Prometheus*.

320 Gen 22:1–10

321 Isa 50:4: 'The Lord hath given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him that is weary.' Erasmus emphasizes this important quality in the preacher. Thomas of Celano's *Vita prima* (*The Life*

prophecy particularly fits Christ, but nothing forbids these words applying to the prophet and containing a prophecy about Christ in the character of a prophet; whatever was written about him was undoubtedly written for our instruction.[322] But in this chapter I am, so to speak, sketching the form of the proper preacher, so that it would not be out of place to pause awhile in contemplation of this passage. 'The Lord has given me':[323] you hear at once the irrefutable authority, then the modesty safe from all arrogance, for who would claim for himself what God has given without charge? What did he give? A good mind? All the devout share that. What then? A learned tongue, which is the special gift of preachers; nor does he say a tongue trained in philosophers' syllogisms or adorned with the embellishments of the rhetorician but learned in the speech of the Lord, as was written about Esdra.[324] For what use did he give it? 'That I may know,' he says, 'how to sustain with a word him that is weary.' When you hear 'that I may know,' you understand the knowledge and good sense of the preacher, of which I have said something already. 'That I may know how to sustain with a word him that is weary,' for there is more than one way of sustaining, and the divine word is applied in different ways to different people. And so a tongue has not been given to the preacher to win fame, wealth, and power for himself but to help as many people as possible: 'sustain,' not cast down, unlike the arrogant manner of the Pharisees, to sustain the weary as in the saying, 'On the road, a witty companion is like a carriage.'[325] We have no permanent city here, but we are temporary travellers hastening to our heavenly homeland.[326] The way that leads to life is narrow.[327] Through the wasteland

* * * * *

of Saint Francis, book 2 chapter 5) imputes this great gift to Hugolino, bishop of Ostia (later Pope Gregory IX), who became a close friend of Francis and a special patron of Francis' new order of lesser brethren (*minores*). See *Francis of Assisi: The Saint* I 269, where Thomas of Celano refers to him as 'the least among the lesser.'

322 Erasmus reiterates this as a fundamental principle of scriptural exegesis. Cf Jerome *Commentariorum in Esaiam libri XII–XVIII* 14 4/7 CCSL 73A 552–3. See also Rom 15:4, where Paul states that 'whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction . . .'

323 Isa 50:4

324 2 Esd 7:65: 'a learned and skilled priest' (Vulg *sacerdos doctus et eruditus*)

325 Publilius Syrus 116 (*Comes facundus*), cited by Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 17.14.4 and Macrobius *Saturnalia* 2.7.11; see *De copia* CWE 24 643.

326 For 'no permanent city . . . heavenly homeland,' see Augustine *De civitate Dei* 15.1 and passim; *Confessions* 10.5.6 and *Sermo 255* in WSA III-7 158; and Erasmus *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 194; Luke 10:38–42 and 1 Cor 5:1–2.

327 Matt 7:14

of this world,[328] through spiritual way stations we hurry to that promised land; meanwhile much occurs that tires the travellers, who would surely fail were we not constantly sustained by a learned tongue. Moses led so many thousands of Hebrews out of Egypt; scarcely one would have reached the land flowing with milk and honey[329] had he not repeatedly propped them up with his learned tongue. According to physicians, physical weariness is a sign of imminent disease, mental weariness of fainting. The man who has a learned tongue knows how to head off approaching disease, knows how to sustain the weak in the faith, knows how to nurse infants with milk, knows how to restore to his footing with the spirit of leniency the man who has been caught by sin.

There follows in Isaiah, 'Morning by morning he pricks up, he pricks up my ear, that I may hear him as a teacher.'[330] What is the meaning of that ἀναδίπλωσις [anadiplosis],[331] 'He pricks up, he pricks up, morning by morning'? Human ears are by nature immobile; deer have very acute hearing when they raise their ears and are deaf when they lower them, but our mind has highly mobile ears, which have to be completely erect for it to hear the voice of the Spirit, and so the doubling is emphatic, as in 'morning by morning.' For human disciplines it does not matter how erect the ears are; for this learning the ears must be singularly erect. Yet the only one who can prick them up is God, and unless you learn your lessons from that teacher, it will be useless for you to profess yourself a teacher; as the psalm says, 'But you perfected my ears, then I said, "See, I am coming."'[332] It is useless for us to have ears if God does not perfect them, and they are perfected by faith and obedience. These are the ears of which the Lord says in the Gospel, 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear.'[333] No one says, 'See, I am coming' unless dragged by the ear; the Lord however does not tug at the ear except 'morning by morning,' that is, at the very break of day. Those who profess human disciplines choose the morning hours if they are preparing to teach something rather subtle, because bodies are better disposed at that time and the mind, being freer from intoxication, is more suited to perceive

* * * * *

328 For 'wasteland of this world' (*per desertum huius seculi*), cf Exod 16:35; Deut 2:7; see especially Jerome Ep 125.2 NPNF 2nd series 6 245: 'and the desert of this world is not untenanted by venomous reptiles.'

329 Exod 3:8; Lev 20:24

330 Isa 50:4

331 *Anadiplôsis* is a Greek rhetorical term meaning 'doubling' or 'repetition.'

332 Ps 40:7 (Vulg 39:8)

333 Matt 11:15, 13:9; Mark 4:9; Luke 8:8

subtleties; this is the reason they say that the noble Aristotle commonly lectured on the difficulties of physics only in the morning but taught rhetoric in the afternoon while strolling.[334] But it must be an outstanding morning to make us capable of learning that heavenly philosophy. The Apostle says, 'The night is far gone, the day is at hand, let us cast off the works of darkness';[335] behold the height of morning. 'Those who sleep sleep at night,' he says, 'and those who get drunk are drunk at night.'[336] If a human teacher is reluctant to teach human knowledge (logic or arithmetic, for example) to someone who is sleepy, nodding, or hungover, how much more will heavenly wisdom disdain to speak to men drunk with love for the pleasures of this world, nauseous in their neglect of the heavenly! Thus wisdom, more precious than all wealth, says in Solomon too, 'I love those who love me, and those who have kept watch for me in the morning shall find me,'[337] and a little later, 'Happy is the man who listens to me, and who watches daily at my gates, and who waits before the posts of my door.'[338] This is what lovers do at the door of their mistress, seeking a harmful pleasure that will soon turn to regret; do we then sleep while awaiting that wisdom than which nothing is more lovable? And what does it promise to its lovers? It says, 'He who finds me will find life, and will obtain salvation from the Lord.'[339] In addition, that 'morning by morning' also reminds us that the future preacher should begin right from his very childhood to ponder upon the law of the Lord in order to avoid what we see happen to many; after growing old in the study of secular philosophy or belles-lettres, they prove remarkably uninspired when they try to speak publicly or to write anything about religion.[340] We do most successfully what we have learned to do since

* * * * *

334 According to Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 20.5.1–6, Aristotle taught the 'exoteric' disciplines in the evening, 'which gave training in rhetorical exercises, logical subtlety, and acquaintance with politics . . .'; the other subjects ('acroatic' training) were treated in the morning.

335 Rom 13:12

336 1 Thess 5:7

337 Prov 8:17

338 Prov 8:34

339 Prov 8:35

340 Erasmus later develops this idea that the preacher's training should begin very early in life; most important is his instruction in virtue and goodness, which should begin as early as possible; see *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 318: 'Goodness, then, is best instilled at an early stage, for once a certain pattern of behaviour has been imprinted upon a young and receptive mind, that pattern will remain.' Erasmus praises John Colet who took on this task with the greatest diligence; see *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 377, 379–80, 383.

childhood. Paul praises in Timothy the fact that he had learned Holy Scripture right from his very childhood,[341] that is, 'morning by morning.' It is also necessary, therefore, to instruct a person destined for the preacher's office to keep watch at the door of hidden wisdom 'in the morning,' that is, early, 'morning by morning,' that is, in full sobriety, and every day, so that the Lord may deign to open his ear so that he can hear him as a teacher, not as an idler hears an itinerant performer or a storyteller but as a true pupil hears a teacher of the sublime wisdom: with fear, with attention, with obedience. Do you want to hear fear? 'The Lord God has opened my ear,'[342] he says. Who would not fear such a teacher? Do you want to hear attention? 'I am not rebellious, I turned not backward.'[343] When will someone who listens carelessly accept responsibility for what he hears? Now listen to obedience: 'I gave my body to the smiters and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard, but I did not turn away my face from those who rebuked and spat upon me.'[344] Behold a heart ready for everything,[345] a heart obedient even unto death.[346] Now hear courage: 'The Lord God is my helper, and therefore I have not been confounded, therefore I have set my face like the hardest stone, and I know that I shall not be confounded. He who is to justify me is at hand; who will contradict me? Let us stand together; who is my adversary? Let him approach me.'[347] Remarkable confidence! He not only does not fear his adversaries but even challenges them to meet. But on what help does he rely? His own? Hardly. 'Behold,' he says, 'the Lord God is my helper; who is there to condemn me?'[348] Likewise, when St Paul said, 'I can do all things,'[349] he spoke the voice not of confidence but of faith, for he immediately added, 'in him who strengthens me.' This is the only safe way to be bold.

The Lord gave a similar tongue and a similar confidence to Jeremiah as well when he was about to preach to the people. 'And the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth,'[350] he says; behold a clean heart, from which arises a clean mouth, which only the hand of the Lord gives. There follows,

* * * * *

341 2 Tim 3:15
342 Isa 50:5
343 Isa 50:5
344 Isa 50:6
345 *paratum cor meum*; Ps 57:7 (Vulg 56:8)
346 Phil 2:8
347 Isa 50:7–8
348 Isa 50:9
349 Phil 4:13
350 Jer 1:9

'And the Lord said to me, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. Behold, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms to pluck up and to destroy and to scatter and to disperse and to build and to plant." '[351] He has embraced the sum of the pastoral office, which resides entirely in first pulling up from the minds of the audience the roots of wicked opinions and the evil seeds of impious doctrine from which bitter fruits grow, and in destroying the building constructed on an evil foundation, dispersing the weeds that have sprouted, scattering the structure badly begun, and sowing a good planting in place of what was torn up and destroyed, and erecting a structure that will give way to no storm. For all this the true preacher uses only the instrument of the tongue, but one that is trained in the word of God, which is 'the divinely inspired Scripture, useful' (as the Apostle says) 'for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man may be perfect, trained for every good work.'[352] But someone who handles heavenly Scripture with a polluted heart and a polluted mouth is told in the Psalms, 'Why do you relate my justices, and take up my testament through your mouth? You hate discipline, your mouth has overflowed with wickedness,'[353] etc.

The most important thing for persuasion,[354] then, is to love what you are urging; the heart itself supplies ardour of speech to the lover, and it brings the greatest force to effective teaching if you display within yourself whatever you are teaching to others. Consider the very beautiful compliment with which the man who was by far the most praised of all praised, John the Baptist, applies to the good preacher: 'He was a burning and shining lamp.'[355] Burning is first, shining second; fire belongs to the mind, light to teaching. Works too have their light, according to the Lord: 'Let your light shine before men so that they may see your good works.'[356] But just as the light of works without fire is hypocrisy, so teaching is weak and ineffective unless it proceeds from a burning spirit. For who will believe a man who praises modesty and sobriety but keeps concubines at home, who habituates unrestrained drinking parties? With what propriety or what credibility will

* * * * *

351 Jer 1:9–10
352 Cf 2 Tim 3:16–17. For the importance of this passage in Erasmus' understanding of the preacher's duties, see books 2 and 3 CWE 68 passim.
353 Ps 50:16–17, 19 (Vulg 49:16–17, 19)
354 The preacher's love of God's word is another fundamental principle for Erasmus; cf Quintilian 12.1.29.
355 John 5:35
356 Matt 5:16

he rebuke the vices of others if he is steeped in the same or even worse? Such reproof, even though it is severe, has no more force than 'lightning made by glass,'[357] as in the Greek proverbs; a sham lightning bolt grazes the eyes lightly but does not flatten or kill. Accordingly, a pure heart and blameless life lend the preacher both credibility and authority.[358] Even Isaiah trembles as long as he had his lips polluted; but as soon as one of the seraphim had cleansed his mouth with a burning coal, he answered with untrembling faith, 'Here I am, send me'[359] when the Lord said, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for me?'[360] But just as the purity that a man makes for himself is false, false also is the confidence that a human purity engenders, for it yields whenever the storm of temptation strikes. False purity is that which certain people claim for themselves from external works, fasts, abstinence, vigils, masses, prayers, alms, clothing and the like, though their heart is impure and infected with a desire for money, a thirst for glory, love of themselves, hatred and envy of their neighbour, a hunger for revenge, sometimes the leprosy of heresy[361] as well. But he alone is truly pure who has been purified by the touch of a fiery and living coal, not from a secular hearth but from the altar of God; for true charity, the companion of a sincere faith, covers a multitude of sins[362] because it is the gift of God and knows neither dissimulation nor pretence. This purity is bestowed not by water poured upon the body but by him who alone baptizes the minds of men with Spirit and fire.[363] Just as every sacrifice that is burned in a common

* * * * *

357 The Latin form of this proverb given here is *fulgur ex vitro*, not *fulgur ex pelvi*. *Vitro* was Erasmus' mistaken translation of the Greek word πυέλιον 'a pan for feeding animals,' presumably a metal pan that reflected light. The history of this Greek proverb is related in *Adagia* II vii 90.

358 Erasmus emphasizes the importance of credibility (*fiducia*) in persuasion, which is grounded in the preacher's moral excellence. This parallels the Roman ideal of the orator as 'a good man skilled in speaking' (*vir bonus dicendi peritus*); see Quintilian 12.1.3: 'For I do not merely assert that the ideal orator should be a good man, but I affirm that no man can be an orator unless he is a good man.' See too 12.1.1: 'The orator then, whom I am concerned to form, shall be the orator as defined by Marcus Cato, "a good man, skilled in speaking."'

359 Isa 6:5–8

360 Isa 6:8

361 'Leprosy of heresy' (*haereseos lepra*); of all the vices Erasmus identifies as most loathsome, obstinately perpetrating heretical teachings takes first place since it is the antithesis of the philosophy of Christ. See book 3 CWE 68 961. See Chomarat *Grammaire* II 1129–39.

362 1 Pet 4:8

363 Ie Jesus; see Matt 3:11; Luke 3:16.

and secular fire is impure and hateful to God, so every work of man that has not been purified by celestial fire is unpleasing to God, for there is even a human charity, which produces works that will perish if tested through heavenly fire.[364] With this fire the Lord cleansed the apostles' lips on the day of Pentecost so that they could speak worthily the magnificent mysteries of God.[365]

But just as among the Jews an animal that was clean for eating was not immediately clean for sacrifice,[366] so not everyone who is clean in the sense of being innocent is automatically clean for the office of preaching the gospel; in our body, being an eye and being one of the limbs are different things. Outstanding endowments are required in an ecclesiastical teacher: a consummate purity, great strength of faith, a singular and burning love; and for that reason the Lord asked Peter three times for love, not any love, but love of himself: 'Do you love me, do you love me, do you love me more than these?'[367] teaching in the person of Peter all those who take up the office of priest. We dare not approach the Lord's table except fasting, and we are right to do this, but the preacher requires greater sobriety. We do not go to offer mass unless we have cleansed our conscience over and over with a detailed confession. I approve of what we do; but I do not approve of the fact that we do not show similar care when we are about to handle the word of God.

But because we are quite convinced, as we ought to be, that the Law is spiritual and that whatever was either written or done in the Old Testament was written and done to instruct us,[368] and because, according to Paul again, the spiritual must be compared with the spiritual,[369] mystical Scripture has portrayed for us as in a painting all the endowments of the preacher through the priest Aaron,[370] who was added to Moses in order to relate before the people not the stories of men but the commandments of God and to act as mediator and patron of the people[371] before the Lord of Hosts. And yet how like a preacher Moses himself is everywhere teaching, exhorting, accusing,

* * * * *

364 Cf 1 Cor 3:13.
365 Acts 2:4, 7
366 See Lev 22:18–24.
367 John 21:15–18
368 Rom 15:4
369 1 Cor 2:13
370 Erasmus proceeds to give a spiritual (allegorical) exegesis of God's prescriptions to Aaron in Exodus regarding his comportment, instructions, and clothing as high priest.
371 See Exod 4:14–16, 19:21–5, 28:1.

soothing, threatening, and above all restraining[372] with his tongue so great and so stiff-necked[373] a multitude, yet asserting nothing except from the authority of the Lord. Joshua and Samuel did the same.[374] But to return to the picture of Aaron. If these things did not have a hidden meaning, then what Moses related in such great and painstaking care about the method of consecration, about the regalia of the priest, about the sacrificial rites, about the return to be made to the priest from each creature, and about the whole way of life of the priest could seem dull and antiquarian; these are described so precisely in Exodus and other books of Scripture that if we do not look to their more recondite significance, they can hardly be read without tedium.[375] All of this offers us a picture to teach the spiritual priest of the New Testament that he should far surpass the ordinary person in all the adornments of the mind, purity of heart, chastity of body, sanctity of character, learning, wisdom, but above all eloquence worthy of the divine mysteries. But it is not my intention to delay the reader here by fitting the details of these things to an allegory, especially since commentaries of the ancients are available from which these things can be learned.[376] But since I am impatient to reach other topics, I shall touch upon some points in a rapid and cursory fashion.

First of all, though the whole people that worships God is rightly called holy,[377] nevertheless Aaron is consecrated in a special rite[378] so that you can understand that someone who is to take up the role of preacher must above all stand apart from worldly business, wholeheartedly devoted and dedicated to divine matters. For it was fitting that, just as the man through whom everyone's victims were consecrated should himself be specially consecrated, so the man who was appointed to call everyone's minds away from worldly cares towards the love of the heavenly should himself be pure of secular desires. The priest's hands were consecrated

* * * * *

372 Cf 2 Tim 3:16.

373 Exod 32:9, 33:3 and 5, 34:9; Deut 9:13

374 For Joshua, see Josh 3:9, 4:1–5, 20:1, 24:1–28; for Samuel, see 1 Sam 8:10, 10:17–18, 15:1–2, 16.

375 Erasmus states above that all Scripture is for our instruction (cf Rom 15:4); here everything depends on the interpreter's skill in discerning the spiritual significances of the letter. The idea is of fundamental importance for Erasmus' exegesis as well as for his programme for instructing the preacher.

376 For other comments on these passages among the Fathers, see eg Origen *Homily IX on the Tabernacle, Homilies on Genesis and Exodus* FOC 71 343–5; John Chrysostom *De sacerdotio* (Treatise concerning the Christian Priesthood) book 6 NPNF 1st series 9 46; and St Jerome Ep 64 passim.

377 *gens sancta*; Exod 19:6

378 Exod 29:1–6

also,[379] whose touch rendered the victim clean for sacrifice. The apostles used to give the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands,[380] and today a priest who absolves after confession lays his hand upon the head, as if the person who was previously the slave of sin[381] were being manumitted and claimed as a free man. Moreover it is inappropriate that hands consecrated to God be polluted with blood to fight in war, or be impure so that they are a slave to unchastity, or be rapacious to be intent upon greed. For these are the two main sources of trouble for priests: luxury is the teacher of unchastity, greed is the mother and root of all ills,[382] and her firstborn child is accursed simony[383] – accursed it was at one time, but now it has almost become a joke.

His sons were consecrated too because, as St Paul taught, it is not enough for the bishop himself to be free of wrong unless his children and whole family are blameless as well.[384] People sometimes conceive an unfavourable opinion about a teacher from his family's faults, reckoning as follows: if those with whom he lives constantly and over whom he has power privately and whom he could quite easily shape to his own character and whom he is preparing to be the heirs of his office have such bad morals, he is either a hypocrite for favouring their worthlessness or else a careless guide.[385] When will a man who cannot control his own household effectively control the church effectively? Likewise also today it is not enough for a bishop to live purely and blamelessly himself unless he ensures that his presbyters and deacons are like him and are suitable to join him in his sacred function whenever circumstance demands or to succeed him upon his decease.

It was not, however, the hands alone that were consecrated but the head and feet as well.[386] Reason is in the head, feelings are in the feet.[387]

* * * * *

379 Exod 28:41, 29:35, 32:29; Lev 21:10

380 Acts 8:17–18

381 Cf Rom 6:6, 17–20.

382 'Greed' (*cupiditas*); 'the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil' (1 Tim 6:10).

383 Simony is the sale of ecclesiastical (spiritual) offices and by extension the sale of anything spiritual. The name derives from Simon Magus (Acts 8:18–24) who sought to purchase from Peter the power that came from the Holy Spirt. See *Paraphrasis in acta apostolorum* CWE 50 58–60. See 'Simony' ODCC 1504.

384 Exod 28:1–43; 29:4, 8–9, 28–9; 30:30. Cf 1 Tim 3:1–4.

385 Cf 1 Tim 3:1–5.

386 See Exod 29:7–21; Lev 21:10. There is no mention of an anointing of the feet with oil, but some blood of a ram is placed on the big toes of Aaron and his sons.

387 Chomarat calls attention to this same expression in *Paraphrasis in Joannem*; see ASD V-4 89 151n. See also *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 161: 'his feet, that is,

Nor was the body alone consecrated by anointing; the robes too were consecrated,[388] to signify that the preacher's life should be so pure of the taints of common men that even in his external actions, such as food, drink, grooming, face, carriage, habitation, and servants, there should appear nothing that does not bear witness to his holiness, so that everything he does is done for the glory of God.[389] Moreover oil, which lends cheerfulness, excludes the sadness of hypocrisy, for true holiness is joyful, not sad.[390]

Furthermore, none of this is done without the offering of a sacrifice, on the grounds that no one has the power to bestow this purity of life without divine assistance, and if anything is bestowed, it must not be claimed for our own strength but attributed to heaven's munificence, which enables us to mortify our animal desires and to serve the Lord in a pure spirit.

Today also priests' hands are consecrated, for they are going to handle the sacraments of the Lord's body and blood, as are the vestments and vessels, even the church itself, partly so that external ceremonies of this kind may provoke the people to reverence, partly so that those initiated in the holy rites may learn from external rituals what great purity of life is required of those who are assigned to sacred functions.

The consecration used to be carried out over seven days and in the tabernacle of God;[391] departure from that place during that time was punishable by death.[392] Execrated, not consecrated, are those who are consecrated

* * * * *

the desires of his heart' and 315 n17: 'The *affectus* or *affectiones* are also the allegorical explanation of the feet given by Augustine *Tract in Joannem* 56.3–5, Hugh of St Cher (on 13:10) 366r, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 13:10) 225r.' See also *Ratio* 179: 'Quid pedes nisi affectus? Quid pedes liberi calciamentorum onere nisi animus nullis terrenis ac fluxarum rerum cupiditatibus oneratus?' See also *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 26–7: 'Faith undoubtedly has eyes while our emotions are the feet of the soul . . .' See also *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 55.

388 Exod 28:1–43

389 Cf Ps 115:1 (Vulg 113:9); John 8:50, 5:44, 7:18.

390 Cf Lev 21:10; Ps 45:7 (Vulg 44:8), 133:1–3 (Vulg 132:1–3), 23:5 (Vulg 22:5); cf Jerome *Breviaria in psalmos* 23.5 (PL 26 885); and Augustine *Exposition of Psalm 22* WSA III-15 244–5: 'because you have gladdened my soul with spiritual joy' (245).

391 Exod 29:35–7; Exod 26:30

392 Lev 8:35. Erasmus' allegorical interpretation of the consecration of Aaron under the Old Law emphasizes the weighty obligations of the priest of the New Law. If Aaron was forbidden to leave the sanctuary on pain of death, how much more should the true priest / preacher of the word of God understand his obligation not to leave the *sanctum* (the holy place / the spiritual life) on pain of spiritual death?

outside the church through simony or who consecrate themselves at home as schismatics do. In fact, throughout the entire period when he practices the religious rites, the priest is forbidden to depart from the sanctuary[393] and considers it wrong to approach even his wife, children, or kin,[394] not because a place or licit intercourse defiles a man, but because all of these are to be interpreted symbolically as relating to purity of mind. Whoever has decided to preach the word of the Lord sincerely must devote himself to constant and careful meditation upon his holy intention so that all the activities of his life are consistent. Someone who has departed from the sanctuary is not someone who goes out of the church but someone who after celebrating mass or preaching a sermon betakes himself to human and secular concerns, to joining or dissolving marriages,[395] to profit and business, to preparing banquets, to apportioning inheritances, to secular embassies, to conducting the business of the rich, to hunting and fowling, not to mention revels, dicing, wenches, warring. I grant that some of these things can be done with propriety, but not every function befits a priest, in the same way that the eye, ear, hand, foot have different functions in the body. The Lord refused angrily when asked to divide an inheritance among brothers,[396] not because dividing wealth among heirs is wrong but because something loftier befits a herald of the word. Likewise he recognizes neither Caesar's image nor his inscription,[397] not because the laws of princes are altogether deserving of criticism but because there are many things in them that are more to be tolerated than approved by devout men, some indeed that are to be neglected and almost ignored, as when Christ is asked by Peter who should pay tribute to kings, the children of the kingdom or foreigners?[398] Nothing whatsoever was hidden from Christ, but he wanted to indicate to his followers that the dignity of the evangelical office is so great that it should not rashly lower itself to mundane and pedestrian business. Someone who has undertaken the task of teaching Christians must first be a pupil of Christ

* * * * *

393 Lev 21:12

394 None of the books of the Pentateuch mention this prohibition; Erasmus perhaps infers this from the many sexual prohibitions enjoined upon the Israelites, especially in Leviticus 18.

395 On 'dissolving' marriages, see Erasmus' *Institutio christiani matrimonii* and Michael Heath's introduction CWE 69 207, 209, 210–11, 216, 221 and 221 n17. The Latin word 'dissolving' (*dirimendas*) can be interpreted widely (eg separate, dissolve, break off, etc).

396 Luke 12:13–16

397 Matt 22:17–22; Mark 12:13–17; Luke 20:21–5

398 Matt 17:24–5

himself; but the Lord says that no one is a pupil worthy of him if he does not for his sake hate father, mother, wife, children, neighbours, even his own life.[399] But the man who neglects all these from love of godliness hates them if on occasion they call him away from it; hence Aaron, while remaining in the sanctuary, does not recognize those related by a kinship of the flesh,[400] while Paul, as he professes to have known no one at all according to the flesh, adds that he no longer knew even Christ according to the flesh though he had once known him otherwise.[401] But human emotions, though no wrong attaches to them, frequently divert those who indulge in them from the single-mindedness required in a bishop. It is true that the Mosaic priests were not always occupied in the temple, since they served by turns, yet in a spiritual sense a bishop has a constant need to minister to holy things, and it is never right to depart from the holy place. Though he be in the court of a prince, at a banquet, on a ship or a carriage, he does not depart from the holy place if by his life and by his words he calls people to zeal for godliness. There alone the priest is safe, though doomed to perish elsewhere.

The same point is made when the priest is forbidden to participate in mourning for his sons and is not allowed to bare his head or rend his garments in the way that the Jews customarily do in bitter mourning.[402] It is harsh to forbid a father tears at the death of his sons, it is harsh not to allow brothers to groan at the sad demise of their brothers, and yet Aaron kept silent and obeyed Moses' commands along with his remaining sons because the Lord had so instructed.

In addition, an everlasting law is prescribed for the high priest at Leviticus 21: he must not attend the funeral even of his mother or father or of any deceased person at all but remain in the temple without interrupting his sacred functions.[403] The reason given is that holy oil has been poured upon his head, for it is not fitting that a head consecrated to God, the author of life, through spiritual unction should be bared or shaved because of carnal emotions. The greater the dignity of the office, the greater the purity of life required; the true death is sin, but the preacher ought

* * * * *

399 Luke 14:26; Matt 10:37–9

400 Cf Lev 8:35. Erasmus infers this from the prescriptions given to Aaron and his sons.

401 2 Cor 5:16; Erasmus *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli ad Corinthios posteriorem* CWE 43 231

402 Lev 21:10–12; cf Ezek 44:15–31.

403 Lev 21:10–15

to be pure and uncontaminated by the contagion of others' wrongs.[404] This law seems inhumane if interpreted literally; burying the dead is a work of charity, but mourning for the dead as the Jews used to mourn is an act of people who do not believe in the resurrection of the body. It is, however, most worthy of a priest to approach someone dead in spirit, but not in order to mourn someone wept over with useless wailing, 'to adorn the lifeless one with tears,'[405] as the poet says, but rather to recall him to life with the word of life, if he is able. This is not mourning the dead but waking the sleeper and giving medicine to the sick. For Christ even the dead were asleep;[406] for us, since it is uncertain whether an unburied sinner, however great his wrongs, will ever come to his senses, we must apply the word of salvation always but apply touch only to someone who is returning to life. Moreover, touch is an intimate practice in ordinary life; a preacher who employs this on those who live wickedly seems to be favouring their vices.

Indeed, the priest is commanded to abstain entirely from the touch of all carrion,[407] that is, from the contagion of all sin, even from the appearance of evil.[408] Otherwise touch is not to be denied entirely to those whose errors are slight and who have been caught in some mild offence, for even the Lord used to banquet with sinners[409] and extends his hand to the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, but not without these words, 'Girl, I say

* * * * *

404 In the following exegeses Erasmus explains the allegorical meaning of the Old Testament priesthood's prohibition from joining in mourning for the dead or touching the dead and the meaning of Jesus' not touching the dead, not even the funereal stone at the tomb of his friend Lazarus. Here Erasmus is using death and sickness allegorically of sin, teaching that the preacher of the New Law ought to avoid physical contact with those steeped in sin. This sense of Scripture is not always consistent; in the case of Jairus' daughter, Jesus was careful to treat the case privately; so a recent sinner guilty of a not too serious offence should be dealt with in private. Cf Augustine *Tractate 49* in *St. Augustine: Tractates on the Gospel of John 28–54* FOC 88 238–59, and John Chrysostom *Homiliae in Joannem* 63 (John 11:30–41) trans Sister Thomas Aquinas Goggin FOC 41 179–90. See the similarly elaborate interpretation of the story of the young man in Luke 7:11–17, where Jesus touches the bier; see *Paraphrasis in Lucam* 7:11 LB VII 352E.

405 Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.48.117; *De senectute* 20.73 (Cicero citing Ennius: *Nemo me lacrumis decoret . . . nec funera fletu / Faxit!*).

406 Matt 9:24; Mark 5:39; Luke 8:52; John 11:11

407 Lev 21–2. See Jerome Ep 64.3 (PL 22 610).

408 Cf 1 Tim 3:1–7; Titus 1:7–9.

409 Matt 9:10–11; Mark 2:15–16; Luke 5:29–30

to you "Arise"' and only after dismissing the crowd.[410] It was a young girl who had fallen, her death was recent, and great care was taken for privacy: the crowd was dismissed, and only two disciples were admitted along with her father and mother. This is the first reproof, which the Lord commands us to make to a neighbour in private.[411] But we do not read of him touching the young man who was already being carried out for burial,[412] the mourning for whom had not remained within his household walls but was being conducted outside the city; rather he only touched the bier so that the bearers would stop, for the first step towards correction is to desist from vices before habit forms a callus and removes the awareness of wrongdoing. He touched him only when he was alive, as he handed him over to his mother, for a sinner who repents should be supported with kindness and courtesy, just as St Paul instructs the Corinthians to receive lovingly and to console in his affliction one that they had cast out for incest, lest he be swallowed up by a more grievous sadness.[413] The ejection of an incestuous person was granted to ecclesiastical discipline; the kindly reception of a penitent is an act of charity, which ought to prevail particularly in such assemblies. Jesus loved Lazarus but was unwilling to attend his funeral;[414] he wept, however, not so much for the dead man, who to him was asleep, as for the disbelief of the Jews, which he was still unable to cure with so many miracles.[415] He did not know the tomb of his friend, for Lazarus already prefigured those of whom it was said, 'He who does not know will not be known'[416] and 'He who is in filth, let him be in filth still.'[417] He does not touch the funereal stone, only applies his ringing voice; even after he was restored to life, he did not touch him but ordered that he be released by the others and that food by given him at once, so that he should give clear proof of his restored life by the natural motion of his body and by eating. And only under these circumstances do we read that Lazarus reclined at the same banquet where Jesus was present;[418] those who have lived all their lives in manifest and terrible wrongdoing should not be trusted immediately but watched until they certify their corrected attitude through unmistakable tokens.

* * * * *

410 Mark 5:22–43; cf Matt 9:23–5; Luke 8:41–55.
411 Cf Matt 5:23–4.
412 Luke 7:11–15
413 See 2 Cor 2:6–8.
414 John 11:5, 36
415 John 11:33–7
416 1 Cor 14:38
417 Rev 22:11
418 John 12:1–2

The following rules also illustrate the need for an exceptional purity of life: that anyone of Aaron's stock[419] who is affected by a discharge of blood is forbidden to approach the priest's table and to eat the holy loaves,[420] likewise that all who are disfigured by some physical flaw or mark are barred from the holy duties,[421] and that the priest himself is ordered to marry a virgin of his own race, to abstain from a widow, a divorced woman, or a prostitute.[422] What is permissible for people in general is not automatically permissible for the priest as well; many things are conceded to the multitude, but supreme purity is required from the priest in every aspect of his life.

The injunction that those who are to perform the rites not drink wine or *sicera* applies not only to the priest but to his sons as well,[423] for it is not appropriate that those who profess themselves teachers of heavenly wisdom should have their heart weighed down with intoxication and inebriation. And here the reason is added: it says, 'That you may have the knowledge of distinguishing between the holy and the profane, between the polluted and the clean, and that you may teach the sons of Israel all my ordinances.'[424] The teacher should be like his philosophy. As James says, this wisdom is chaste, peaceful, modest, open to reason, in harmony with the good, full of love and good fruits, judging without pretence;[425] but drunkenness and luxury beget immodesty, give birth to quarrels, teach violence, prattle secrets, rob all judgment.

In order not to weary the reader by discussing each of the many details, I shall treat briefly a few points concerning the priest's garb.[426] The whole consists of garments made of plain white linen[427] and of others dec-

* * * * *

419 Lev 22:4–6

420 Erasmus speaks of 'a discharge of blood' ('si quis de stirpe Aaron teneatur profluvio sanguinis, vetatur ad sacerdotis mensam accedere sacrisque vesci panibus . . .'), but Leviticus 22:4 (Vulg) renders 22:4 as 'a discharge of seed,' with the result that the man of the line of Aaron will be unclean: 'homo de semine Aaron qui fuerit leprosus aut patiens fluxum seminis non vescetur de his quae sanctificata sunt mihi donec sanetur . . .' See also Lev 15:2 (Vulg): 'loquimini filiis Israhel et dicite eis vir qui patitur fluxum seminis immundus erit.'

421 Leviticus 22

422 Lev 21:13–15

423 Lev 10:9; *sicera* (or *cicera*; LXX σίκερα), from the Hebrew word meaning 'a kind of spirituous, intoxicating drink'; see Jerome Ep 52.1; Isidore *Etymologiae* 20.3.16. The word is not used in the Vulgate (*vinum, et omne quod inebriare potest*).

424 Lev 10:10–11

425 James 3:17

426 Exod 28:4–42; Lev 8:13, 16:4

427 Exod 28:4; Jerome Ep 4.11–17 (to Fabiola) PL 22 613–17

orated with a variety of hues, adorned with the starry splendour of precious jewels,[428] brilliant with the gleam of gold, and marvellously woven throughout by the genius of the artisan. These things were appropriate for that people; for us, on whom has shone the truth of the gospel,[429] they signify the interior ornaments of the spirit, not the kind that dazzle the eyes of the ignorant with the costliness of things that the Lord commanded us to scorn,[430] but the kind that kindle the minds of those who see them towards love for that priceless treasure. Aaron's vestments were more than royal, but that true highest priest after the order of Melchisedech[431] wore none of these, nor did his disciples; but they had all these things within, and much more splendid, not from the skill of Beselehel[432] but from the power of the Holy Spirit.[433] To provide a more orderly account of the whole garb of the priest, we shall begin from the middle of the body, that is, from its most private part, and proceed from here to the lowest and highest parts.[434]

First of all, not only the high priest himself but also the other priests or assistants at the rites are commanded to wear linen drawers,[435] which, being drawn tight about the hips, thus cover the body's shameful parts, for they extend as far as the thighs, so that while the priests, in performing their sacred rites, bend their bodies to a variety of tasks, something that is more decently concealed does not happen to appear to the eyes of the people.

Over these 'breeches' was an ankle-length tunic [ποδήρης][436] not dissimilar, I think, to what we now commonly call a *camisia*,[437] of double linen,

* * * * *

428 Exod 28:9, 17–20
429 John 1:4–5, 9
430 Matt 6:19–24; Luke 12:15–34, 16:13; Mark 10:17–30
431 Ie Jesus. See Gen 14:18–20; Ps 110:4 (Vulg 109:4); Heb 5:6–10, 7 entire.
432 Exod 31:1–11, 35:30–5
433 Cf Acts 2:4.
434 Erasmus begins to interpret the spiritual meaning of sacerdotal garments worn by Aaron the high priest; see Exodus 28 and 39:1–30. For his understanding of the prescriptions addressed to Aaron and his sons Erasmus relies heavily on Jerome Ep 64.11–17 PL 22 613–17.
435 Latin *campestria linea* (Vulg Exod 28:40–3 *tunicas lineas*). To describe an article unfamiliar to the Romans, Erasmus uses the word *campestria* 'running shorts made for athletes,' so-called because they were used in sports at the Campus Martius. In the following paragraph this garment is called *bracae* 'breeches,' a word of Gallic origin. From its description in the sources, it is clearly not a loin cloth since it has separate parts for the legs. (A. Dalzell)
436 See Exod 28:4; Jerome Ep 64.11 CSEL 54 598; see Josephus *Antiquitates Judaicae* 3.153.3, 3.159.3.
437 A late Latin word for a long gown

deep blue in colour,[438] open at the top so that it could be put on by inserting the head, but without a hood and fitting the whole body so neatly that it had no folds, so that those who attended to the rites were not hindered by flaps of cloth; this garment covered the arms as well.[439] Around the top edge of this tunic was added a woven tape of the sort generally found on the edges and fringes of garments to prevent their being torn easily. Moreover it came down longer than the breeches, indeed as far as the shins or ankles.[440]

This tunic was drawn in from below the chest to the navel by a sash[441] decorated with many colours and flowers,[442] of solid work, the width of a hand – military style.[443]

A tiara[444] – that is, a kind of round cap – woven of linen covered the head in such a way that it left some part bare above the brow; this was tied at the back of the head to keep it from slipping off easily.

The features mentioned so far concerning Aaron's dress were shared by the other priests with the high priest, but he had certain special features, such as the fact that around the bottom of his tunic, which we have said clung to his whole body, were added pomegranates and bells with the same variety of colours as the sash. The bells, moreover, were of gold, so arranged that one bell came between two pomegranates, with the result that wherever the high priest went he made a sound as he moved.[445] He would be punished with death if he walked without a sound. There were seventy-two bells (and as many pomegranates) to make the sound louder and more continuous.

* * * * *

438 Erasmus is wrong in suggesting that the long tunic was blue ('hyacinthine'). All priests, including the high priest, wore the white tunic. The high priest wore a blue tunic over the white. Cf Exod 28:31–5. (A. Dalzell)

439 Jerome Ep 64.11 CSEL 54 598

440 Exod 28:32–3

441 Exod 28:4, 39, 40

442 The warp was white and the woof woven from blue, red, purple, and white threads, giving a pattern that suggested flowers and jewels; see Jerome Ep 64.11 and Josephus *Antiquitates Judaicae* 3.154. (A. Dalzell)

443 Latin *gestamen militare*, literally 'military wear.' This comment seems to be inspired by Jerome Ep 64.11, where he compares the priest's tunic to the tightly fitted (*sic aptas membris et adstrictas corporibus*) tunic worn by soldiers. (A. Dalzell)

444 Erasmus Latin *tiara*; Vulg *cidarim*; Greek LXX κίδαριν: see Exod 28:4, 36–9, 40; Lev 8:9; Josephus *Antiquitates Judaicae* 3.7.157; Jerome Ep 64.13, 19 CSEL 54 599–600, 609–10. See 313–14 below.

445 Exod 28:35

The *epomis*, which they translate *superhumerale*,[446] covered the shoulders; it was rather longer at the back, covering even part of the shoulder blades, but did not extend equally far over the chest, in order to leave a place for the most sacred ornament of all, which they call the 'rational.'[447] Jerome thinks that it was a mantle, not unlike a *caracalla* except that it lacked a hood;[448] if anyone wants a contemporary example, I suppose that it was not entirely unlike the shoulder capes with which German women modestly cover themselves today, except that the high priest's superhumeral was constructed with marvellous workmanship from little gold chains, rings, and hooks, and decorated with the four colours blue, scarlet, white, and purple, having on either shoulder an onyx set in gold. The ancients were uncertain whether the onyx ought to be counted among the gemstones;[449] for it is found in such large pieces that cups and ointment jars are carved from it. On the right stone were engraved the six names of the elder sons of Jacob, on the left the same number of the younger ones, and Scripture adds, 'And Aaron bore their names before the Lord upon both shoulders for a remembrance.'[450]

Over the chest another garment, lesser than the others in size but more sacred than all the rest, was joined to the *epomis* by little gold chains and rings; the Septuagint translated its name as λόγιον [oracular breastplate], Jerome as *rationale*.[451] It was woven from gold and decorated with the same colours as the superhumeral; also it was double for strength and was square,

* * * * *

446 The Vulgate rendering *epomis* of the LXX ἐπωμίς (see Exod 28:6 τὴν ἐπωμίδα), a word used of the upper part of a Greek woman's tunic, meaning literally 'on the shoulders,' is in turn literally translated into Latin as 'superhumeral' (*superhumerale*).

447 Exod 28:4,15. See Josephus *Antiquitates Judaicae* 3.7.163.

448 Jerome Ep 64.16 PL 22.616. *Caracalla*. L&S *caracalla* describes this garment as Celtic in origin: 'a long tunic or great-coat, with a hood, worn by the Gauls, and made of different materials.' The garment was introduced by the emperor (Caracalla) Marcus Aurelius Severus Antoninus Augustus (ruled 198–217), from which he received his cognomen. Erasmus is likely recalling here Jerome's reference to this in Ep 64.16 (to Fabiola) PL 22 615. OLD does not have an entry for *caracalla*.

449 See Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia* 37.24.90–1.

450 Exod 28:12

451 Exod 28:15–30; see Jerome Ep 64.16 CSEL 54 602–3. In English translations of Exodus, this is variously rendered as 'breastpiece' or 'breastpiece of judgment' or 'breastplate of judgment' or 'rational.' The original Hebrew word meant 'pouch' for it held the Urim (doctrine) and Thummim (truth), two stones used as instruments for consulting the divinity; but the meaning of these two devices is obscure. It is likely they worked as oracular lots, which could provide a negative or affirmative answer; see eg 1 Sam 14:20–42, 30:7–8. See Jerome

each side having the width of a palm or of four fingers. On it were four rows of precious stones, which Scripture lists by name. Each line had three stones, so they were twelve in number; on each gem was engraved the name of one of the patriarchs. I think that this chest covering is called δήλωσις or ἀλήθεια, that is, 'manifestation' and 'truth,' on account of the wonderful brightness of the gems, in which they think there was even a kind of divination.[452]

There remains the tiara,[453] which in the case of the high priest has this special feature that it displayed, bound above his forehead with a blue cord, a golden plate on which was written the tetragrammaton, the name of the Lord;[454] this is why the high priest is forbidden to bare his head to anyone lest the head of God, whose personage he bears, should appear subordinate to a human person.[455]

It would be laborious indeed to explain what each of these reveals to us according to its moral sense, since the mere reporting of the details as described by Moses is a highly troublesome task.[456] What is clear is that this more than royal garb signifies, certainly in deacons and presbyters, a mind adorned with every kind of heroic virtue and a perfect purity of life. But still loftier gifts of the spirit than these are required of someone who has undertaken the office of preacher. In this respect all presbyters and bishops are high priests; but after what belonged to one began to be distributed among many as human charity grew colder,[457] that which was the chief function

* * * * *

Ep 64.16 CSEL 54 602–4; JBC I 63 (79), II 704–5 (6–8); William H.C. Propp *The Anchor Bible. Exodus 19–40. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York 2006) 429–55.

452 Exod 28:30; cf Lev 8:8.

453 For 'tiara,' see Jerome Ep 64.16 CSEL 54 602–4 and 64.13 CSEL 54 599–600; see also 311 n444 above.

454 On tetragrammaton, see Jerome Ep 64.16 CSEL 54 602–4: 'The golden plate, that is, SIS ZAAB, on which the name of God is written with the four Hebraic letters YHWH [JOD, HE, VAV, HE], which among them is called ineffable.' See Exod 28:36, 39:30; Lev 8:9. The Vulgate translates these four letters as *Dominus*, the Septuagint as Κύριος.

455 This explanation is neither in Scripture nor in Jerome's letter. Exodus 28:38 says only, 'It shall always be upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord.'

456 Erasmus, like Jerome (*iuxta morem nostrum, spiritualis postea intelligentiae vela pandamus*), now interprets the moral (or tropological) and allegorical senses of these details about the vestments of Aaron and the Old Testament priesthood; see Jerome Ep 64.16 CSEL 54 602–4. For the four senses of Scripture, see introduction 199–200 and n617.

457 Erasmus speaks here of the significant change that took place in the church after bishops no longer assumed the duty of preaching exclusively but enlisted others to assist them. He sees this turning point occurring 'when human

[*quod . . . praecipuum erat*] of the high priest, namely teaching the people the precepts of the Lord, was now delegated to preachers. It is right, therefore, that those who claim the primary function of a presbyter should exhibit Aaron's whole adornment, not literally but allegorically, so that, wherever they turn, their light shines before men, their spiritual teaching sounds forth, and their whole life is one outstanding example of godliness.

On his head he wears the tiara[458] covered with blue linen because the mind, which is the highest part of a man, looks only at heaven and the heavenly, as the sky-blue colour of the headband demonstrates; the priest who is eager to please men, who abandons the truth of the gospel out of fear of the mighty, who twists Holy Writ to human desires,[459] is baring his head. On his forehead he carries the name of the Lord,[460] whose mysteries he dispenses, so that it is disgraceful for him to forget the one he professes as Lord and creator and to submit himself to any man, when Paul says that he will not yield even to an angel preaching from heaven.[461] In the same passage he says, 'Am I urging God or men? If I still pleased men, I would not be a servant of Christ.'[462] Someone who flatters the sins of men by laying bare, for example at a funeral, the gift of prophecy that he received from the heavenly Spirit or exposing it to men, corrupting the word of God from fear of the rich and mighty, is betraying and profaning his anointing.

Honour and love are owed above all to God,[463] whose name he bears atop his brow; next these are offered to the Lord's flock, and for this reason he carries on his shoulders the names of the sons of Israel,[464] which he carries not for human ostentation but before God, to whom, as Scripture has it, he will render an account for the sheep entrusted to him;[465] this is that

* * * * *

charity grew colder' (cf Matt 24:12); before this it was the bishop alone who preached, and it was the bishop's 'chief characteristic' to teach the people the precepts of the Lord (*id quod in pontifice praecipuum erat, videlicet populum docere praecepta Domini*). Erasmus' words anticipate the revived emphasis on the bishop by the Council of Trent; see Tanner II 667–70, *Decretum secundum: super lectione et praedicatione.* See n140 above.

458 See n444 above. Erasmus seems to be following Jerome exclusively for this interpretation of the colours of the sacred vestments.

459 Erasmus often rails against preachers who 'twist Holy Writ' to suit their own convenience or for profit; see book 2 CWE 68 513, 522; book 3 CWE 68 898–900.

460 Exod 28:36

461 Gal 1:8

462 Gal 1:10

463 Deut 6:5; Matt 22:37; Mark 12:29

464 Exod 28:36–7

465 John 10:11–16, 21:15–17; cf Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2.

glorious burden that weighed upon the shoulders of Paul as well, the care of all the churches.[466] He carries them on his shoulders as he recognizes that the necessity of preaching the gospel[467] has been placed upon him and that to him has been enjoined the dispensation of the divine word,[468] which is the food of souls;[469] he carries on his breast, so that he cannot forget them, those whom he has adopted in the place of children and towards whom he ought to bear a parent's affection.[470] The Apostle bore all of them in his heart; whenever he sees his children advance in evangelical devotion, he so exults that he calls them his 'joy and crown'[471] in the Lord, 'rejoicing as they rejoice, weeping as they weep,'[472] as he burns if anyone stumbles, is tormented if any is weak,[473] gives birth a second time to those children lapsed to Judaism until Christ is formed within them,[474] wishes to be spent and overspent for their souls[475] and 'to be made anathema by Christ'[476] so long as he wins some as profit for Christ,[477] 'changes his voice'[478] among them and lowers himself 'like a nurse tending children,'[479] carries them all in his heart and in his bowels, as he himself writes.[480] The pastor, therefore, has no reason to say, 'What have I to do with a filthy tanner or with an abject beggar or with a two-bit drab?' No soul for which the Lord of glory[481] deigned to die should seem worthless,[482] and do not shrink from carrying about inscribed on gems those whose names have been written in heaven. But since you are not certain which names have been written in the book of life[483] and which have not, you will be vigilant for the salvation of them all as though they have been inscribed. If you have carried out your

* * * * *

466 2 Cor 11:28
467 1 Cor 9:16
468 1 Cor 9:17
469 Deut 8:3, cited at Matt 4:4; cf Luke 4:4.
470 Cf Rom 8:15; Gal 4:5; Eph 1:5.
471 Phil 4:1
472 Rom 12:15
473 2 Cor 11:29
474 Gal 4:19; see *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Galatas* CWE 42 118–19.
475 2 Cor 12:15
476 Rom 9:3
477 1 Cor 9:19, 21
478 Gal 4:20; see *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Galatas* CWE 42 118–19.
479 1 Thess 2:7
480 Phil 1:8
481 1 Cor 2:8
482 Cf Matt 8:8, 10:6, 15:24, 18:11; Luke 19:10; Gal 3:26–8.
483 Luke 10:20; Phil 4:3; Rev 17:8, 22:19

appointed function in good faith, the death of some will not be laid to your account; you owe your service to the Lord, the outcome is in his hand, not yours.[484] Unction is on the head, the λόγιον is on the breast because reason, by which we judge and which Paul calls spirit,[485] is the source from which flows whatever good is in us, if it is imbued with heavenly inspiration. From the head comes our knowledge of what constitutes sound teaching, out of the breast come voice and speech. For it is not enough that a priest knows what is right and devout unless the capacity to teach others is present.[486] Since that embraces knowledge of both Testaments, the λόγιον is twofold, pertaining to the Old, which is covered in the wrappings of figures and riddles,[487] and to the New, which uncovers the mysteries, offering manifest truth in place of shadows. It can also refer, however, to the double meaning of Scripture, of which one is more straightforward, the other allegorical and more sublime: the preacher should be versed in both. In explaining them, ἀλήθεια [truthfulness] should be present so that the preacher's teaching is not erroneous, since a perverse life arises from perverse opinions; then δήλωσις [manifestation] should be added so that whatever in Scripture has been hidden[488] should be made manifest by appropriate interpretation in order that it becomes clear even to the unlearned, so that, in other words, by removing the veil that had been placed over the face of Moses[489] those who believe in Christ may uncover their face and behold the glory of the Lord.

But we do not yet hear the sound of the golden bells that the bottom of the robe produces, for one must not leap forward immediately to the office of teaching unless the capacity to teach has first been created in the breast over a long period, nor must we teach others what they ought to believe, how they ought to live, unless what we are going to urge upon others first shines forth in our own life and behaviour. Jesus first began to act, then to teach, and the most effective kind of teaching is to show in one's own life what it is to live devoutly.

* * * * *

484 See 275 above.
485 See eg Gal 5:17.
486 This is the crucial skill and responsibility of the preacher; the bishop is primarily the teacher, like 'Christ, the teacher of all teachers.' See 321 below.
487 For the allegorical sense of Scripture ('wrappings and riddles') by which the Old Testament speaks of the things in the New Testament, see eg Gal 4:24 and book 3 CWE 68 919, 959.
488 For 'hidden,' see 2 Cor 3:7–18; Luke 24:27, 32.
489 Exod 34:33–5; cf 2 Cor 3:14–16.

In the middle are the linen breeches,[490] which restrain the loins and private parts to prevent any stain of turpitude either hiding in the soul or appearing in life.

There is also the double tunic of ordinary or fine linen[491] representing the innocence of body and mind, which we received in baptism when the white robe of the immaculate lamb[492] was given to us in place of the robe of skin[493] that we had received from Adam; the latter was stripped from dead animals, the former was born from the earth, brilliant and shining with the brightness of living, having nothing in common with dead things, for whoever is born of God does not sin.[494]

This is fastened by a sash. Girt with this, the soldier of Christ[495] stands in the truth; it binds his tunic lest it flow loosely, and it holds fast the 'rational' that adorns the breast to prevent it from puckering – for the 'rational' is connected from above to the superhumeral, from below to the sash. There are two things that protect innocence of life in the shepherd: fear and love of the highest shepherd, who, he believes, entrusted the flock to him, and unbroken sobriety of life, which brings with it watchfulness and prayer;[496] and so the Apostle writes to the Ephesians, 'Stand with your loins girded in truth,'[497] indicating that a chaste life is appropriate to chaste speech. For where there is pretence, there is no truth. He says to the Thessalonians, as if in explanation of this, 'We are not of the night or of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk are drunk at night; but since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love,'[498] etc. What Moses called a tunic the Apostle calls a breastplate;[499] what the former called a sash, the latter calls sobriety and vigilance

* * * * *

490 Exod 28:42; see also Jerome Ep 64.10 CSEL 54 597–8; Augustine *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum* VII 2.122 CSEL 28(2) 171; Origen *Homiliae in Leviticum* 4.6 and 6.6 FOC 83 76–80.

491 'Double tunic of ordinary or fine linen' (ποδήρης); Exod 28:31; see Jerome Ep 64.11 CSEL 54 598. See n436 above.

492 Ie Jesus Christ. See Exodus 12:5 'lamb without blemish' and references in the New Testament to Jesus as the Lamb of God: John 1:29, 36; Rev 22:1, 3.

493 Gen 3:21

494 1 John 3:9, 5:18

495 For 'soldier of Christ' (*Christi miles*), see n138 above.

496 Cf Matt 26:41; Mark 13:33; Luke 21:36; 1 Pet 4:7, 5:8.

497 Eph 6:14

498 1 Thess 5:5–8

499 'Breastplate' (*lorica*); 1 Thess 5:8; Exod 28:31

in truth.[500] Soldiers carry provisions in their belt; purity is preserved in the fear of God, which threatens from above and in unbroken sobriety of life. 'Fear is the beginning of wisdom,'[501] drawing us back from evil;[502] sobriety, as it girds the soft parts of a man, restrains concupiscence to prevent our becoming enervated through luxury and negligence. Only in this way do the golden bells, which are interspersed with pomegranates, ring out.[503]

Pomegranates have a bitter rind but a pleasantly refreshing juice within; this is brotherly correction,[504] which tempers the harshness of rebuke with the juice of Christian consolation. They do not ring, because a neighbour's vice is to be concealed so far as possible. Hence Paul suppresses the names of the false prophets;[505] he did not wish us to know the name even of the incestuous man,[506] and the Lord could not bear to reveal the name of his betrayer[507] because he preferred that he be corrected rather than destroyed. The bells ring because general teaching helps everyone, harms no one.

I have no doubt that far more mysteries than I have briefly indicated here are concealed in the priests' garb, especially since mystical Scripture has depicted them so carefully in several passages that outstanding Doctors of the church, such as Origen, Tertullian, and Jerome, have not shrunk from making exceptional efforts in explaining, though Tertullian's work was unavailable even to Jerome;[508] but for our present purpose, if types of this kind indicate what purity is required in the priest of the Old Testament both in his mind and in the whole of his life – the splendour of gold signifying the wisdom of the gospel, the brilliant jewels indicating the principal virtues, which they call heroic, the variety of the most precious colours, which seem

* * * * *

500 Exod 28:4; 1 Thess 5:6
501 Prov 1:7 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge . . .'; Ps 111:10 (Vulg 110:10)
502 Cf Job 1:1, 8; 2:3.
503 Exod 28:33–4
504 Ecclus 19:13–15; Matt 18:15; cf Augustine *De civitate Dei* 1.9; Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 33 aa 1–7.
505 2 Cor 11:13. Chomarat (ASD V-4 103 449–50n) notes that Erasmus adopts this way of concealing those he criticizes in his satire *Moria*, which he explains in *Epistola ad Dorpium* CWE 71 1–30, especially 18.
506 1 Cor 5:1
507 Matt 26:21–6; Mark 14:17–21; Luke 22:21–3; John 13:21–30
508 See Jerome Ep 64.23 PL 22 622, where he notes that Tertullian is said to have written a book on Aaron's vestments: 'A book on Aaron's vestments appears in the index of Septimus Tertullian, which for some time up to this very day I have not found.'

to indicate those moral virtues (for four are enumerated) and (not to go on too long) the careful and elaborate adornment of mind and of life – how much greater are the qualities to be required of the evangelical preacher?[509] The loftier the office, the greater the perfection demanded of him who performs it. Aaron used to lay his consecrated hands upon the victim to be slaughtered,[510] Aaron's sons slaughtered cattle,[511] stood by the cauldrons to lift with their fork the portion of meat owed to the sacrificers,[512] brought out and stored away the vessels, cleaned altars;[513] in sum, their work did not look very different from the similar activities of butchers, cooks, or tavern keepers, and nevertheless great honour was accorded those who ministered to these things. How great, then, is the dignity befitting the ministers of the New Testament, who daily sacrifice that heavenly victim that merits the adoration even of the angelic spirits, who touch with their hands the flesh of the immaculate lamb! So much for services; now let us consider the difference in learning.

What did Aaron teach? The laws of God. What are these? That the people know the difference between a clean and an unclean animal[514] and the difference between one clean for sacrifice and one clean for eating,[515] which animal ought to be sacrificed at what time, in what manner, with what rituals, when and how the unleavened cakes[516] should be cooked, from what things the incense (that is, the fumigant) should be made.[517] These, or certainly things of this kind, are the precepts that Aaron is commanded to teach the people of Israel. But what did he promise? That they would be well off and live long upon the earth,[518] have fertile wives, see the children of their children, have fruitful fields. Unsophisticated things suited the unsophisticated; and yet in the observance of these laws the discipline

* * * * *

509 Latin *quanto maiora requirenda sunt ab ecclesiasta evangelico*; this rhetorical comparison is fundamental to Erasmus' exegesis of the Old Testament, where what is adumbrated there is brought into full light in the New Testament.

510 Exod 29:9–10, 15; Lev 3:2, 8, 13

511 Exod 29:10; 2 Chron 29:21–4

512 Cf Exod 38:3.

513 Num 4:13

514 Lev 11:46–7

515 Deut 15:21–3

516 Lev 2:4, 7:12; Num 6:15; Exod 29:2

517 Exod 25:6, 30:34–8, 35:28

518 Leviticus 25–6 passim; Deut 11:14–15, 21, 23–5; 28:3–13. Chomarat (ASD V-4 105 482–4n) notes that Erasmus omits the promises about victory in war and the annihilation of enemies.

was so severe that two of Aaron's sons were consumed by a heavenly fire because they used secular fire for the rituals, contrary to the injunction of Moses.[519] King Ozias was stricken with leprosy for a similar wrong;[520] Oze, who tried to prop up the Ark with unanointed hands when it slipped, perished instantly.[521] How great, therefore, ought to be the awe of those who impart to the people that ineffable philosophy that the Son of God brought to earth from the bosom of his Father, and which that heavenly Spirit[522] inspired in the souls of the apostles, a wisdom that the world cannot comprehend. They promise neither long life on earth nor a country flowing with milk and honey, fecund wives, a numerous flock, fertile fields; but in this life they pledge remission of all sins through faith in Christ Jesus,[523] and in the resurrection they promise eternal life in heaven.[524] Those who either rashly usurp this holy office or administer it unworthily are not burned up by a heavenly fire, are not overwhelmed by sudden death, are not covered over by leprosy, but are cast body and soul together into everlasting fire.[525] The loftier the dignity, the more grievous the punishment of the delinquent. Someone might perhaps say at this point, 'If the danger is so great, and so many qualities beyond human strength are required of the preacher, it is better not to touch that Camarina.'[526] I would heed that warning if the business had to be done by human strength; as it is, the very one who delegates the office provides the strength and increases his gifts in accordance with the difficulty of the office, so much that we wholeheartedly place our trust in him and call upon his Spirit in constant prayers.

* * * * *

519 Lev 10:1–2, 16:1; Num 3:4, 26:61
520 2 Chron 26:16–21
521 2 Sam 6:6–7; 1 Chron 13:9–11
522 Acts 2:2–4
523 Matt 26:28; Acts 10:43; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14
524 John 6:40; 2 Cor 5:1
525 Matt 25:41. This is one of the few references to hell in *Ecclesiastes*.
526 See *Adagia* I i 64 *Movere Camarinam* 'To move Camarina.' 'To move Camarina,' Erasmus interprets, 'is to bring trouble upon oneself.' The most likely explanation is that Camarina, a town near Syracuse in Sicily, gave its name to a swamp that, when drying up, exhaled a pestilence. The townspeople consulted the oracle whether they should drain the swamp completely, which the oracle forbade. Nevertheless, they unwisely did so, with the result that 'their enemies came in across it, and they were well punished for not attending to the oracle' (107). Erasmus' introduction of this adage with the words 'Someone might perhaps say at this point . . .' is an example of *anteoccupatio*, which he discusses in book 2 CWE 68 559–60; see Cicero *De oratore* 3.53.205.

And here again something else will occur to someone, and he will say, chiding me, 'If that ability depends upon the kindness of the deity, say no more: you have already done your duty by advising whence it must be sought – there is no further need for your instructions.' Let him again have the reply that anyone who has a mind or a tongue worthy of a preacher must simply ascribe it to the heavenly Spirit, but let no one now expect what was displayed in the apostles.[527] Miracles suited the beginnings of the nascent church, though not even the apostles were suddenly made heralds of the gospel out of ordinary citizens. For some years they offered very attentive ears to Christ, the teacher of all teachers; they fasted and prayed for ten days when about to receive the Holy Spirit and did the same constantly after receiving it,[528] and it is likely that they commonly spent some part of their time in reading the Bible. Certainly Paul asks to have books sent to him, especially those written on parchment;[529] these, I think, were not the books of Plato or of Pythagoras or cabalistic or Talmudic books, but those of the Old Testament. Paul, who wrote, 'I think that I too have the spirit of God,'[530] knew that its help would not fail him, but he also knew that that Spirit hates sloth,[531] loves industrious and alert minds, and so Paul does not disdain to be the pupil of Ananias[532] and does not shrink from comparing his Gospel with Peter and James.[533] Even supposing that none of this happened, yet the nature of our times is different, for no one would be heeded now who said, 'I received my gospel neither through a man nor from a man, but from Jesus Christ,' though even today, especially in Italy, there are some who claim openly before the public to have the spirit of prophecy:[534] certainly I have heard one with my own ears who did this

* * * * *

527 Ie after the experience of Pentecost (Acts 2 and Acts passim).

528 Cf Acts 1:14. Erasmus deduces this from two references to chronology: the 'forty days' after the resurrection and before the ascension when Jesus spoke to the apostles 'about the kingdom of God' (Acts 1:3), and Pentecost, the festival ending the paschal season and harvest festival (cf Lev 23:11); therefore fifty days after Easter and ten days after Jesus' ascension. At this time the apostles awaited the Holy Spirit promised by Christ (Acts 1:4–5). For their fasting, see Matt 9:15; Mark 2:20; Luke 5:35.

529 2 Tim 4:13

530 1 Cor 7:40

531 Cf 1 Tim 5:13; 2 Thess 3:10–11.

532 Acts 9:10–19

533 Galatians 2

534 Such claims were not uncommon. The Fifth Lateran Council (1513–17) prohibited preachers from making such claims and statements; see Tanner I 635: 'They [bad preachers] dare to claim that they possess this information from the light of eternity and by the guidance and grace of the Holy Spirit.' This

openly at Rome at a great popular gathering. I am not saying this because the hand of God has been shortened; now as in the past it can give a human voice to a she-ass.[535] The spirit of Christ works even today in the prophets, for I call prophets those who explain the mysteries of arcane Scripture, and the Apostle mentions this type of prophecy among the special gifts of the Spirit;[536] but it requires our own effort so that through it the Spirit can work in us not less but more secretly. But if, in the days when miracles were in season, Peter urged his followers to heed the prophetic word as a lamp shining in a dark place,[537] and Paul advised that whatever was written in Sacred Scripture was written for our instruction so that by steadfastness and the consolation of the Scriptures we might have hope,[538] all the more should we in these days not sleep or nod off while awaiting the gifts of the Spirit. For, as must be repeated often, he wants them to be requested in prayers neither infrequent nor unimpassioned;[539] he wants them to be sought through good works;[540] he wants them, as it were, to be purchased by our labours, partly that he may give them to the worthy, partly that he may give them more bountifully. Thus he lavishes them upon those on whom he wishes and to the extent that he knows they are needed, and the gift he gives is absolutely free,[541] so that we can claim nothing that comes from it as our own,[542] lest we become puffed up[543] and fall into the devil's snare;[544] but he imparts this munificence of his not to the sluggish, not to the hostile, not to the resistant, but to those who ask it urgently with faith and to those who accommodate themselves as wholly as they can to the divine beneficence. The prophet exclaims, 'Make a clean heart in me, O God,'[545] but if the Lord required no effort of our own here, he would not advise

* * * * *

suggests that Erasmus was familiar with the decrees of Lateran V. See Minnich.

535 Balaam's ass (Num 22:28–30)

536 1 Cor 14:1; see *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* ASD VI-8 266–7, where Erasmus calls prophets those who 'explain the mysteries of arcane scripture' rather than those who give 'a prediction of things to come' (*Hoc loco Paulus prophetiam vocat non praedictionem futurorum, sed interpretationem divinae scripturae*). See also 1 Cor 12:28 and *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* ASD VI-8 246–8.

537 2 Pet 1:19

538 Rom 15:4

539 See Luke 18:1; Rom 12:12; Col 4:2–3; 1 Thess 5:17.

540 1 Tim 6:18; Titus 3:1, 8, 14; James 1:25

541 Eph 2:7–10

542 Cf 1 Cor 3:21; Eph 2:9; Gal 6:14; James 2:14.

543 1 Cor 4:6, 18, 19; Col 2:18; 1 Tim 3:6; 2 Tim 3:4

544 1 Tim 3:7, 6:9

545 Ps 51:10 (Vulg 50:12)

us through the prophet Ezekiel, 'Make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.'[546] The heart is our means of understanding, the spirit our means of speech. Solomon would not say, 'It is man's part to prepare the heart and the Lord's to guide the tongue,'[547] nor would Scripture reproach Roboam because he had not prepared his heart to seek the Lord,[548] nor would the Baptist, Christ's *πρόδρομος* [forerunner], shout in the desert in accordance with the prophecy of Isaiah, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his pathways.'[549] From the Father of lights[550] comes every excellent and every perfect gift; from him as from the highest source flows all that is. But just as someone who has not obeyed his physician's advice is said to have caused his own illness, and just as someone who has implored a physician's help and handed himself over to him for treatment is said to cure his disease, similarly a man makes a new heart for himself when he does not retreat from the divine grace that calls him to better things,[551] when he opens for someone who stands before the door and knocks.[552] And he prepares the way for the Lord's coming when he recognizes the disease and gives the physician a kindly reception, when he obediently accommodates himself to the person who is offering the medicine, for this is in a sense helping the helper and cooperating with the operator. Just as someone who has rejected a physician is said to have destroyed himself, so whoever has entrusted himself to a reliable physician is said to have saved his own life, not because he could provide good health for himself but because he did not repulse someone who was willing to restore his health. But this obedience or petty effort of ours, if any of it is ours at all, is not so important that we should not ascribe everything to the munificence of divinity; but if this insignificant exertion of ours is not present, then the whole problem is

* * * * *

546 Ezek 18:31. Erasmus again brings up the complex theological question of the preacher's cooperation with the Holy Spirit for carrying out this ministry efficaciously.

547 Prov 16:1

548 2 Chron 12:14

549 Matt 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23; cf Isa 40:3.

550 James 1:17

551 Erasmus gives hints here of his belief in the constant bounty of God's grace, which human beings continuously resist through idleness or perverse sinfulness. Human industry is required, but the initiative and result are fully God's. The whole issue of grace and human effort is discussed at great length in *De libero arbitrio* and *Hyperaspistes* 1 and 2 CWE 76–7; see also *Annotationes in epistolam ad Romanos* CWE 56 261, and *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Romanos* CWE 42 55–9.

552 Rev 3:20; Luke 11:9–13; Matt 7:7–11

imputed to our idleness[553] for our having failed the divine goodness, which challenges us in so many ways on every side. Once when the Lord was consulted and, promising victory, commanded the Jews to attack their enemy, they armed themselves no less eagerly and made ready whatever contributed to winning the victory,[554] not because they distrusted the promises of the oracle or placed their hope of victory in their own strength but to ensure that their sloth did not render them unworthy of God's promises. For just as the Ninevites in submitting themselves to penitence compelled God, as it were, to sing a palinode[555] and to change his promulgated sentence, turning his anger to mercy,[556] so those who either reject or retain ungratefully God's prompt and welcoming kindness compel him, contrary to his nature, either to refuse or to reclaim his gifts and to direct threats in place of his spurned liberality, inasmuch as it is God's nature to benefit everyone. But if, in those ancient times when the hardness of the Jewish race or the infancy of the still suckling church required miracles, the Israelites did not withhold their own exertion from the divine promises, and if the Apostle, as was said, issues a call to the study of Scripture by innocently confessing that the spirits of the prophets are subject to prophets,[557] how much less appropriate it is in these times that we should nod off waiting for the grace of the Spirit to slip into us as we doze, now that faith in the gospel has grown up and reached maturity[558] and has no use for oracles or for miracles, since it regards canonical Scripture in place of oracles, faith instead of miracles, and according to the prophet Isaiah, 'The law of the Lord bound and sealed in our hearts is more precious to us than all the answers of the living and the dead.'[559] Our effort will not lessen the power of the Spirit[560] so long as we eschew self-confidence and attribute every

* * * * *

553 Erasmus singles out the vice of idleness (*inertia*) as a fundamental human failing and as resistance to God's constant promptings to embrace the philosophy of Christ. In this Erasmus falls in line with John Chrysostom's singling out 'idleness' (ῥαθυμία) as the greatest vice holding Christians back from eagerly embracing God's grace. See Carole Straw 'Chrysostom's Martyrs: Zealous Athletes and the Dangers of Sloth' *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 93 (2005) 521–54.

554 See eg Josh 10:7; 1 Sam 23:2–4, 30:8; 2 Sam 5:19–25.

555 *Adagia* I ix 59 *Palinodiam canere* 'To sing a palinode'

556 Jon 3:10

557 1 Cor 14:32

558 1 Cor 13:10–11

559 See Isa 8:16–19.

560 An important element of Erasmus' theology of grace is that the quantity of human effort in no way compromises or diminishes the activity of the Holy Spirit.

success to him who alone prospers human actions.[561] In fact, if heavenly grace comes upon us and finds in us some natural gift, such as physical health, a sonorous voice, an articulate tongue, a quick intellect, a reliable memory, or some ability obtained by human effort such as the adroitness in deduction that dialectic provides, the oratorical power that rhetoric confers, the knowledge of nature that science offers, it does not take them away but perfects them,[562] turning them to the promotion of godliness and to the glory of Christ. Paul, the persecutor of the church, learned the Law eagerly at Gamaliel's feet;[563] when the Spirit came upon him, it perfected this previously deadly knowledge and turned it into the most fertile fruit of the gospel. He seems to have been crafted by nature for speaking, having a quick mind, a burning intellect, a ready tongue; hence while Barnabas, who was taken for Jupiter, was silent, he was called Mercury because he was the leader in speech;[564] but the accession of the Spirit neither reduced the authority and dignity of Barnabas, which were displayed in his countenance, nor deprived Paul of his gifts. Cyprian's eloquence gave no faint lustre to the church, but he had acquired it while still serving idols instead of God; therefore the Spirit did not take it away but perfected it. Similarly St Augustine learned rhetoric and philosophy in paganism and exercised them in the heresy of the Manicheans; the Spirit took neither of these from him but completed what was imperfect, turning to the profit of the church even the very thing that was wicked in him, for if he had never been mad with the Manicheans, he would neither have revealed their insanity so plainly nor refuted it so effectively.[565]

* * * * *

561 2 Cor 3:4–5, 4:5–15

562 Erasmus expresses the scholastic principle that grace perfects nature: nature has, as it were, an 'obediential potency' (*potentia oboedientialis*) or fundamental receptiveness to the divine activity. See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* III q 111 a 4 on the relationship of gratuitous grace to nature and to persuading others to believe. Erasmus gives the examples of Cyprian and Augustine whose skills in pagan rhetoric were perfected by the Holy Spirit after their conversions to Christ. St Paul, of course, is the example par excellence.

563 Acts 22:3

564 Acts 14:11

565 See for example Augustine's anti-Manichaean writings *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* PL 42 207–518, *Answer to Faustus the Manichean* WSA I-19 and *The Manichean Debate* I/20, and in NPNF 1st series 4 3–365; Peter Brown *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1967; rev ed 2000) 46–60; James J. O'Donnell *Augustine: A New Biography* (New York 2005) 47–54. See also *Augustine* 'Mani, Manicheism' 520–4 and 'Anti-Manichean Writings' 39–41.

It is the duty of parents or teachers, therefore, if they have marked out someone for the office of preacher, to prepare him right from infancy as an instrument for the Holy Spirit, to train him in morals and especially in those subjects that are most effective for the ability to teach.[566] For just as someone once cleverly remarked that the person who should be called learned is not someone who has learned the most but someone who has learned what is best and most necessary,[567] so the future preacher must spend his effort and his life – which is fleeting and brief, even if old age, which is not granted to many, should be his lot – not with just anything at all, but must learn first and foremost those things that are most suited to the office of teaching. We have already characterized these to some extent elsewhere,[568] and will do so to some extent in this work when it will be appropriate. People who are being trained for athletics and for agriculture, for sailing, for soldiering and for holding a magistracy, or for medicine, for legal cases and for service at court are not all educated by the same methods; but if the children of this age instruct their children with such care and thoughtfulness for common and humble occupations, and if someone who thrusts himself forward for these occupations without training is driven off with public derision, how careful must be the preparation for the office of preacher, both the most beautiful and the most difficult of all. If someone now puts his hand to the plough without training in that skill, is he not pushed aside at once in mockery? If

* * * * *

566 Erasmus again emphasizes that education begins early, which holds true especially for the aspiring preacher. It is the duty of parents, bishops, and princes to provide encouragement and the means by which young men can learn the liberal arts, study Scripture, and above all be instructed in the virtues. Erasmus anticipates the canons of the Council of Trent (especially Session 23, Canon 18) legislating the establishment in dioceses of houses of liberal arts and Scripture, which would eventually lead to the Roman Catholic seminary system (seminary being a 'seedbed of the virtues'); see Tanner II 750–1. See also Quintilian 1.1.3 for the duty of 'a father' to 'devote the utmost care to fostering the promise shown by the son whom he destines to become an orator.'

567 Here Erasmus anticipates the Council of Trent's Session 5, *Decretum secundum: super lectione et praedicatione – ea, quae scire omnibus necessarium est ad salutem* – the subject of the preacher's teaching; Tanner II 669–70. See 154, 268 above where Erasmus reformulates this as 'those things that are most suited to the office of teaching.' Erasmus promises elsewhere to discourse on these subjects; see book 4 passim where he takes up these teachings of the faith.

568 See CWE 24 697–702 for the 1530 catalogue listing all of Erasmus' works; among his works on literature and education of particular relevance for instructing future preachers are: *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 291–346; *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 347–475; *De ratione studii* CWE 24 661–91; *De copia* CWE 24 279–659.

a storm comes up and someone without knowledge of the pilot's art seizes the rudder, does he not find himself being attacked immediately by angry passengers and in danger of being cast headlong into the sea? I shall turn to humbler matters to make my point. If someone goes to dance among the French ignorant of French steps, or among the Germans ignorant of German steps, or among the Italians ignorant of Italian steps, is he not met at once by general ridicule? Someone who plays at dice without knowing the rules and customs belonging to that 'subject' is also regarded as impudent, and someone who enters fencing school and errs through inexperience against the rules of the art is sometimes killed. How absurd, then, are the judgments of mortals who admit anyone at all to an office more truly angelic than human, men of untamed emotions, neither pure of vice nor trained in literature nor inspired by the Spirit nor steady in faith nor burning with charity, and not, I might add, either sober or sane; it takes only an ashen robe, a black or white mantle. And yet a man who wears a helmet or a breastplate is not immediately assigned to soldiering, nor is someone with a sailor's uniform straightway admitted to the helm, nor do we entrust the building of a house to anyone who has a saw or axe; rather we inquire carefully what sort of workman he is and what he has done. Now there leap up into the pulpit, that is, onto a more than royal seat, men who have been prepared for this office by no instruction, who put off all shame and set their tongues rolling, project their voices, thundering whatever comes into their mouths[569] or whatever has been prescribed to them by the unlearned or whatever human emotion has dictated; not to mention meanwhile those whom, alas, we hear too frequently, who speak in such a way that their words breathe only flattery, boasting, profit and, what is worse than these, hatred and envy of one's neighbour, and do it so obviously that sometimes the congregation, however dull and ignorant, gets up and leaves in midspeech. No wonder; in the theatre an actor is hooted off if his gestures suggest Thersites[570] when he is playing Agamemnon. Now leaving the church is all that is permitted to the crowd, since the custom of applauding, acclaiming, whistling off, and hooting off, which was derived from secular assemblies and from the theatres of the heathen and long persisted in ecclesiastical assemblies, has

* * * * *

569 Cf *Adagia* I v 73 *Quicquid in linguam venerit* 'Whatever may come on the tongue.'

570 A base warrior in the *Iliad* 2.212–14: 'Ugly was he beyond all men who came to Ilios'; Homer describes him as one 'whose mind was full of a great store of disorderly words . . .' Thersites upbraids Agamemnon in the assembly but is shouted down and struck by Odysseus for being out of place. See *Lingua* CWE 29 270 and n5; *De virtute amplectenda* ibidem 5; *Adagia* IV iii 80.

long since been discarded. So all the more detestable are those who do not shrink from abusing the reverence of a holy place and the awed silence of the people and the authority of the divine word. It is one thing to speak from a wagon[571] or from a table but quite another to teach the heavenly philosophy from the sacred pulpit. The more sacred the function, the greater the dignity of him who performs it; and of course the greater the dignity, the greater the circumspection[572] with which the business must be conducted.

The first rank in the political hierarchy belongs to kings, but among the king's duties none is more noble than when he sits before a tribunal and examines cases, or urges before an assembly something pertinent to the tranquillity of the state. The highest dignity in the ecclesiastical hierarchy belongs to bishops;[573] however many their functions, chief among which are the administration of the sacraments and spiritual instruction, he is at the pinnacle of his dignity whenever he feeds the souls of the people with the flesh and blood of Christ, which is the Word of God.[574] The disciples of the apostles once used to perform baptism, just as the Lord Jesus did not himself baptize, but the apostles used to baptize in his name.[575] He himself used to teach personally, and for some time, as the church matured, no one preached in the churches except the bishop; afterwards the role of teaching was transferred to the presbyters, but to outstanding ones and not indefinitely, but only if they had a bishop who was insufficiently skilled in the vernacular but was otherwise a devout and learned man (as happened to Augustine under Valerian,[576] who was Greek by birth and

* * * * *

571 See *Adagia* I vii 73 *De plaustro loqui* 'Wagon-language.'

572 Latin *circumspectio*; similar to 'appropriateness'; see Cicero *De oratore* 3.210–12.

573 Erasmus takes up again this division between state and church, king and bishop; see 250–3 above. At the top of the ecclesiastical hierarchy stands the teacher-bishop, and teaching is his chief function in the church. Erasmus frequently emphasizes this fundamental distinction of orders.

574 Erasmus' words can be read to include both the bishop's teaching and his dispensing the Eucharist, though in this context and often elsewhere 'feeding' refers to the bishop's teaching office; as the passage below suggests, Christ's primary work was teaching, while the administration of the other sacraments (ie baptism) was left to the apostles. Erasmus holds nothing as more important than expounding 'canonical Scripture' by preaching. See 390 below: 'Mystical Scripture is a living bread descending from heaven, which bestows eternal life upon those who eat it: but someone is needed to break this bread appropriately and distribute it according to the Redeemer's example.'

575 Acts 8:12, 38; 9:18

576 Chomarat notes that Erasmus' memory failed him; the bishop in fact was Valerius; see ASD V-4 115 674n; see Possidius *Sancti Augustini vita scripta a Possidio*

therefore less fluent in Latin; but such honour was accorded Augustine, because of the dignity of the office, that he sat in the bishop's chair while the bishop was still alive), or if the absence of a bishop, due to the pressures of business or to illness, required the services of a substitute. Now, though this role is widely delegated to monks and presbyters,[577] nevertheless anyone who steps up to that place ought to remember that he is occupied in an office that far surpasses the dignity of a king and that is primary in a bishop, who is greater than any king, certainly in so far as the sublimity of his office is concerned. This statement is not made to make the preacher conceited[578] but to make him put aside human desires and respond with great awe and sincerity to the magnificence of his office. Epaminondas[579] so conducted an insignificant and despised magistracy, which had been delegated to him by popular vote as an insult, that afterwards it came to be sought as a splendid office: the heathen deservedly praise a heathen who by his own ability added dignity to a despised function; but what praise would a Christian earn if, by conducting it badly, he renders cheap and contemptible an office that is inherently most honourable?[580] After God himself the church has nothing more sacred, more wholesome, more venerable, and more sublime than the word of God, that is, canonical Scripture; but just as the Lord complains in prophecy that his name becomes ignominious and has a bad reputation among the nations because of the wickedness of those who

* * * * *

episcopo ed Herbert T. Weiskotten (Princeton 1919) 49 (with revised text, introduction, notes, and an English version): 'Valerius, a Greek by birth and less versed in the Latin language and literature, saw that he himself was less useful for this end. Therefore he gave his presbyter the right of preaching the Gospel in his presence in the church and very frequently of holding public discussions – contrary to the practice and custom of the African churches. On this account some bishops found fault with him.' See also Peter Brown *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1967; rev ed 2000) 138–40.

577 In Erasmus' day preaching was carried on extensively by members of the religious orders, above all by Franciscans and Dominicans, who frequently came into conflict with local ordinaries. The Fifth Lateran Council and the Council of Trent moved to reassert the authority of the bishop in all matters pertaining to preaching; see Tanner I 636–8; and II 667–70, 763–4.

578 For 'become conceited' (*cristas sumat*), see *Adagia* I viii 69 *Tollere cristas* 'To raise one's crest.'

579 See Plutarch *Moralia* 811B (*Precepts of Statecraft*), which says, 'Not only does the office distinguish the man, but also the man the office'; cf Valerius Maximus 3.7 ext 5.

580 Another example of an argument by comparison.

avow it,[581] so he could complain with perfect justice that the faults of preachers make that sacrosanct office contemptible. Indeed, even the kings of this age think it an insult to them if their ambassadors have done something contrary to decorum. So the greater the one who sent them and the more serious the business being communicated, the more ambassadors are on their guard to ensure that they match both the dignity of the prince and the importance of the business delegated to them. But, as must be said often, among all the functions of human life none is more serious, none more noble, and none more dangerous than that of the preacher.[582] If you are wondering whence he has been sent, it is from that prince who created, sustains, and guides the universe; if you are wondering what his mission is, it is to teach his people the heavenly philosophy. It is not, therefore, a matter of arranging a marriage or claiming sovereignty or concluding a treaty between two powers; rather it is a matter of getting as many souls as possible espoused to Christ, who is so fervent a lover that he did not hesitate to die for them, a matter of keeping Satan from seizing what Christ redeemed with his own blood, of preventing wolves from devouring the Lord's flock, of keeping the Christian people from deserting their emperor, to whom in baptism they once and for all pledged their allegiance. This embassy, moreover, has been entrusted to the pastors on these terms, that if they omit no aspect of their office, they nonetheless claim from this no praise for themselves because whatever they do, they do in another's name, under another's protection and authority; but if they carry out their mission badly, all the loss is laid at their door. Through Ezekiel the Lord prescribed this law for the preacher:[583] if, through slackness in carrying out his delegated office, either a wicked man was not converted to penitence or a just man was turned away to impiety when the preacher should have won over the former and restrained the latter, both should die together, the wicked man for committing impiety, the preacher for his neglect of duty; and in the same prophet the Lord threatens that he will demand back his sheep from the hand of the shepherds who neglected the flock but fed themselves, shearing, milking, and slaughtering the sheep while taking no care of them.[584] What sort of paradise are those men promising themselves who take on the care of many sheepfolds and,

* * * * *

581 Ezek 36:20–3

582 See Larissa Taylor 'Dangerous Vocations: Preaching in France in the Late Middle Ages and Reformations' in *Preachers and People in the Reformations and Early Modern Period* ed Larissa Taylor (Leiden 2001) 91–124.

583 Ezek 3:18–21

584 See Ezek 34:1–10.

burdened with four or five bishoprics,[585] do not even think about pasturing their sheep, but become feeders on, not feeders of, their flocks and out of the yield of their sheep erect satraps' palaces, prepare Sicilian,[586] or rather Sybaritic,[587] dinners every day, keep warhorses, keep concubines, keep a more ostentatious retinue of servants than even secular princes?

An ambassador, moreover, errs in three ways: if he fails to perform what he has received in his commission; or if he does something else in passing that had not been commissioned; or if he otherwise displays anything in his behaviour that could bring disgrace upon the authority who entrusted his business to such a spokesman.

Someone who occupies the place of a teacher and accepts his fee but does not teach errs in the first way. Someone who teaches the word of God while intermingling some human doctrines, or who professes himself a soldier and general of Christ but is entangled in secular business, cultivating the courts of princes not in order to impart salubrious counsel to them but to offer himself as a constant companion[588] in banquets, gambling, dancing, hunting, and jesting, errs in the second way. Someone who preaches the gospel alertly enough and without error but abrogates the credibility of his teaching by an impure life errs in the third way.

The language of prophecy calls those who belong to the first sort 'mute dogs without the power to bark';[589] shepherd and dog are different in external features, but in this condition they are the same. They see a predator stalking night and day and hunting something to devour; they see wolves attacking the Lord's sheep pen and do not have a voice with which to drive away and reveal the thief, with which to frighten off the wolves – I only wish they sometimes lacked a voice with which to attract thieves and wolves! Zechariah calls shepherds of this kind 'idols,'[590] that is, statues and images

* * * * *

585 Erasmus criticizes the abuse of holding a plurality of benefices, ie where one man might be bishop and enjoy the revenues of two or more episcopal sees. This was one of many common abuses in Erasmus' day, but the greatest abuse he sees is in bishops who did not preach, even if they held only one see.

586 Erasmus' adage is actually *Syracusana mensa* 'A Syracusan table'; see *Adagia* II ii 68.

587 See *Adagia* II ii 65.

588 For 'a constant companion' (*omnium horarum socius*), see *Adagia* I iii 86 *Omnium horarum homo* 'A man for all hours.' See the preface to *Moria* (Ep 222:21, CWE 27 161–2) where the phrase is applied to Thomas More: 'You are both able and pleased to play with everyone the part of a man for all seasons.'

589 Isa 56:10

590 Zec 11:17

that display the perfect appearance of shepherds but are endowed with neither mind nor voice. If you were to examine their dress, if you were to observe their title, if you were to see them demanding tithes, you would say that they were pastors; if for the healing of your conscience you were to require wholesome counsel for the soul, admonition, consolation, the nourishment of sacred teaching,[591] you would say that they were worse than statues, which want to be worshipped but do not know how to be of use. A little earlier in the same prophet the Lord says that there is no shepherd in Israel,[592] for someone who brings nothing useful to his flock does not deserve the name of shepherd. The prophet describes the useless shepherd in these words: 'Behold, I shall raise up in the land a shepherd who will not seek out the lost, will not search for the scattered, and will not heal the maimed, and will not nourish the sound, and will devour the flesh of the fat ones, and will tear off their hooves,'[593] and at once the voice of the angry God cries out against such a monstrosity: 'O shepherd and idol, and deserter of the flock.'[594] The only charge against this foolish shepherd is his silence and his failure to tend the flock, since he himself is fed from the yield of his flock, not feeding it but feeding upon it. And yet hear the Lord's most terrible threats: 'The sword,' he says, 'is over his arm and over his right eye, his arm will be withered by dryness, and his right eye will be darkened by shadows.'[595] The prophet calls this shepherd 'foolish,'[596] for he thinks that he is something though he is only an idol; he claims power for himself while he thunders against his subjects, he claims the wisdom of this world, but he will be deprived of both, with his arm cut off and his eye darkened.

In the second group belong those to whom the charge of παραπρεσβεία[597] [a false legation] applies, that is, conducting an embassy otherwise than as it should. As I began to say before, error is committed here in more

* * * * *

591 Cf 2 Tim 3:16.
592 Zec 10:2
593 Zec 11:16
594 Zec 11:17
595 Zec 11:17
596 Zec 11:15
597 The Athenians held legates accountable for state embassies; those that failed or betrayed the *polis* were charged with conducting a 'faithless' or 'dishonest embassy.' See LSJ 1322 παραπρεσβεία. Aeschines' *De falsa legatione* (*On the Embassy* and Demosthenes' *De falsa legatione* (*On the False Embassy*) give accounts of their joint embassy to Philip of Macedon. See also Quintilian 4.4.5 and 7.4.36–7.

ways than one: first, if some part of the commission is passed over; next, if the ambassador adds something on his own beyond his commission; finally, if when a prince's embassy has been received, he does something incidentally that is unworthy of the representative of a king or that is outside his responsibilities and diverts him from attending to his commission. It is also counted among the charges of παραπρεσβεία when someone receives a gift from those to whom he was sent (apart from those minor presents that are often given to ambassadors as a token of respect), such as accepting some authority or a rich benefice or significant annual revenues.

The first kind of error is made by those who preach the law of God strictly to the weak but to the powerful are silent or, even more disgracefully, fawning; Isaiah, in chapter 9, vents his anger against these under the riddle of the head and the twisting and corrupting tail.[598] Before ordinary folk they shout that the decrees of princes and bishops must be obeyed under penalty of Gehenna;[599] among princes they either keep silent or else speak to win favour. The prince, they say, is above the law.[600] There is nothing that the prince cannot do out of his sure knowledge and plenary power; all the property of the citizens belongs to the prince, should he demand it, nor may the people inquire why he demands it. And yet Christ cries out most harshly against the rich,[601] against the scribes and the Pharisees,[602] the governors of the people, though not unaware that there are adulterers, misers, drunkards, and gluttons among the common people as well. I would not say this because I think that those who trouble the minds of princes with seditious and unseasonable clamourings deserve approval. One thing suited the prophet of the Old Law, another befits the teacher of the gospel, and things that were appropriate to Christ, to whom no blemish of wrong ever clung,[603] are not to be expected from a human evangelist as well, since he is a sinner admonishing sinners. Truth needs to be

* * * * *

598 See Isa 9:14–15.

599 Ie hell; cf Matt 5:29–30, 10:28.

600 *princeps est . . . supra legem*; proponents of royal absolutism argued that only a prince 'absolved from the laws' (*a legibus solutus*) could exercise full power to enforce the laws. See Erasmus' comment on the difference between monarchy and tyranny: *Tyrannicida* CWE 29 115 and Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia–IIae q 96 a 5 ad 3. Royal absolutists, however, acknowledged that the prince was subject to divine law, which kept check on the king from becoming a tyrant. For the idea of the absolute prince, see 'Absolutism' ER I 2–4.

601 See especially Luke 16:19–31, 18:18–25; Mark 10:17–25.

602 See Matt 23:13–35.

603 Heb 4:15, 9:14; 1 Pet 2:22

revealed to different people in different ways according to the nature of the times and persons but should be withdrawn from no one when the case demands it,[604] so that one may boast with Paul, who bears witness as follows among the Ephesians: 'You know that I held back nothing that was useful to you and that nothing prevented my declaring it to you and teaching you publicly.'[605]

Those who add something of their own to the divine are no less seriously at fault than those who take something away; for sometimes it is right to conceal the truth when the hearer is unworthy or when he is yet unable to be taught the mystery. But mixing the human with the divine as though they were equals is a kind of sacrilege, for Scripture prohibits it many times, as in Deuteronomy 4, 'You shall not add to the word which I speak to you nor shall you take from it';[606] and also in Revelation the Holy Spirit threatens curses upon anyone who adds to or takes anything from the prophetic words.[607] But someone who keeps back some things for the present through discretion in finding the right moment is not diminishing, and someone who accommodates Scripture, which is naturally fertile, to various interpretations (a matter of which we will speak in its own place) is not adding so long as the interpretations are devout and useful. Someone who finds in the words of Scripture a meaning that is indeed devout but that perhaps the Holy Spirit did not express in those words is also not adding so long as he has an ingenuous spirit, which will yield readily if someone teaches him the true significance. Who is it then that adds? Someone who rates purely human enactments as equal to divine precepts, who knowingly twists the words of Scripture to a wicked or heretical meaning, who, among the untrained, quotes from canonical Scripture what is nowhere to be found there, who cites Plato or Aristotle with no less pride than Isaiah or Paul: not because the truth is not Christ's wherever it has been found, but because one may have doubts about human words, not so about divine. Aristotle teaches that a wife ought to be compliant to her husband, but this is right not because Aristotle taught it but because natural and divine law alike

* * * * *

604 Erasmus reiterates the fundamental rhetorical principle of accommodation; see 137, 278 above; see also Quintilian 11.

605 Acts 20:20. Erasmus mistakenly refers here to Ephesians. Chomarat cites this as 'a new proof that from one edition to another the text was reviewed neither by Erasmus nor by an attentive corrector' ASD V-4 121 788–9n.

606 Deut 4:2

607 Rev 22:18–19

so dictate; but whatever God instructs is right because it was instructed by the Lord.[608] A slave is asked in a comedy, 'Who ordered you to say this?'[609]

But if those who transact business or do something else of that kind when undertaking an embassy in the name of a prince or of a state are prosecuted, what should be said of those who undertake the office of the preacher, which requires the whole human heart and all the mind's strength, and not only transact their own business but even lend money and wage war and (I am ashamed to relate) lower themselves even to humble services, presiding over the kitchens of the rich for a scanty fee or tending constantly their hunting dogs and bird-catching fowl. 'But they are not preachers; they are only presbyters,' you will say; but teaching the gospel once belonged to all presbyters – surely they all ought to strive to qualify for admission to the office of teaching if occasion should demand. Does a man then who is toiling at such a great matter have time left over to spend on unessential business, which, though not disgraceful, is certainly harmful by virtue of calling him away from necessary concerns, inappropriate because those gestures do not befit this character, and criminal because those involved in these affairs do not give the Lord the work they owe and will be called worthless servants[610] when the time comes to exact a reckoning?

But if such integrity is required in human embassies that accepting a sumptuous gift from those to whom they are sent is subject to blame, what should be said of those who plunder the people they teach, who grasp at inheritances and wealth, who hunt the glory of the world even though Paul, so outstanding a preacher, says, 'Having food and clothing, with these we are content';[611] and yet among the Corinthians and Thessalonians he went beyond this, procuring food for himself with his own hands in order to preach the gospel without charge.[612] Scripture forbids 'tying the mouth of an ox that is threshing,'[613] and the Apostle recognizes that it is fair 'that no one be a soldier at his own expense.'[614] He admits that the worker deserves his reward, and writing to the Galatians he commands, 'Let him who is

* * * * *

608 Erasmus takes up these precepts on handling Scripture properly in book 3.
609 Terence *Phormio* 639
610 Matt 18:32; Luke 19:22
611 1 Tim 6:8
612 1 Cor 4:12; 1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8
613 Deut 25:4; cf 1 Cor 9:9 and 1 Tim 5:18.
614 1 Cor 9:7

catechized' and instructed 'share with the catechist,' but adds 'in all good things';[615] but for the servant of God to grow rich in this world is not good, and for him to be charmed by the glory of the world is not good, and for him to be stuffed at splendid banquets is not good. To receive these things from the people, then, is wrong. In many places preachers have salaries prescribed for them, which suffice for a comfortable life provided they are thrifty and sober; the stipend is awarded to preachers, not to banqueters, not to satraps, not to keepers of whores or horses, and they should be content with it, especially since they are expecting an invaluable stipend, eternal life,[616] from him whose business they are transacting. Yet the Lord promised that on those who wholeheartedly seek the kingdom of God he would also bestow what pertains to physical necessity;[617] the kingdom of God is the yield of the gospel.[618]

Finally, if in the secular world those who had not been thrifty before and had lived rather dissolutely compose themselves when they undertake an embassy, summon up all the strength of their intellect, and, as it were, take on another personality to fulfil their delegated office, how much more should someone who performs an embassy for Christ apply the same attention in order to reconcile the world to the Father through him, as Paul writes to the Corinthians: 'All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, because God was in him reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses, and placed in us the word of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us.'[619] When you hear 'all this from God,' you recognize the stature of the sender; when you hear 'who through Christ reconciled us to himself,' you hear the sublime and indeed welcome theme of the mission; when you hear 'and placed in us the word of reconciliation,' you recognize the inescapable commission. You are sent by God the Father, on behalf of the Son of God; you bring the most joyful news, news of peace restored with God and with his Son. Your role is to persuade all and sundry who have placed their trust in Christ that through him all the sins of their past life are freely forgiven and that they are summoned to share as coheirs with Christ in the heavenly life[620] so long as they

* * * * *

615 Gal 6:6
616 1 Tim 6:12; John 12:25, 17:2
617 Matt 6:25–34
618 Matt 13:31–2; Mark 4:30–2; Luke 13:18–19
619 2 Cor 5:18–20
620 Cf Heb 9:15.

are resurrected through him and 'walk thereafter in the newness of life.'[621] He writes similarly to the Ephesians with the prayer 'that utterance may be given me in the opening of my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel for which I am an ambassador in these bonds.'[622] And will not a man who has undertaken an embassy so difficult, so splendid, and so gratifying compose himself and summon every care to perform his delegated office sincerely, fittingly, successfully? Or will he even offend, so as to destroy his credibility by his behaviour and disgrace his office and provoke the anger of the sender against himself and cheat Christ of his profit? Or will he rather render his delegated function commendable by the holiness of his life?

Paul honours his Gospel: 'For I say to you gentiles, in so far as I am apostle of the gentiles, I honour my ministry if I somehow provoke my flesh to emulation and cause some of them to be saved.'[623] But how does Paul glorify his function? Not by the number of his horses, not by the clamour and livery of his servants, as the ambassadors of this world commonly do, but by becoming all things to all people[624] out of his zeal for gaining as many converts as possible,[625] making himself everyone's servant because he administers the gospel free,[626] that is, to use his own word, ἀδάπανον [without cost],[627] by being careful in every way not to place some stumbling block in the path of the gospel,[628] and by preaching Christ with unflagging zeal in the midst of so many afflictions, incarcerations, and deaths.[629] All preachers should hasten towards this outstanding example so far as their strength allows, and those who are intended for this office should be educated towards this goal from childhood.[630]

* * * * *

621 Rom 6:4
622 Eph 6:19–20
623 Rom 11:13–14; the phrase 'my flesh' (Vulg *carnem meam*) refers to Paul's blood kinship with the Jews: see *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Romanos* CWE 42 64–5: 'if somehow in this way, I might challenge my own people – for they are my people by blood relationship but strangers in the matter of faith – to emulate your piety, even by a kind of envy and jealousy, for the Jews are a jealous race.'
624 1 Cor 9:22
625 1 Cor 9:19–22
626 1 Cor 9:18
627 Latin *gratis*; 2 Cor 11:7; 2 Thess 3:8; *sine sumptu* (1 Cor 9:18)
628 1 Cor 9:12
629 Cf 2 Cor 11:23.
630 Erasmus once again emphasizes that the education of the preacher begins in childhood; here again the model of St Paul the preacher is put forward as the best for emulation (*egregium exemplar*), except for Christ, of course.

'But,' you say, 'rank should not be one's aim, nor should anyone undertake the task unless summoned like Aaron.'[631] It is one thing to seek after a rank out of a human desire, another to be aflame with eagerness to benefit as many as possible, yet another to prepare oneself for this most beautiful function in case he should be called, and another to usurp the task uncommissioned. The Apostle says, 'He who desires the office of bishop desires a noble task,'[632] inasmuch as 'bishop' is a title of office and not of rank, and bishop is a military word, so called because someone who professes himself leader of an army ought to ἐπισκοπεῖν, that is, 'look around,' to ensure that the soldiers of his banner lack nothing; hence Homer too calls Hector ἐπίσκοπος [overseer] and the commander Agamemnon ποιμὴν λαῶν,[633] that is, 'shepherd of the people.' Hence someone who desires this outstanding office is praised in Paul's mouth so long as he simultaneously looks to the things required for performing the office,[634] for a catalogue of these things is immediately appended: 'A bishop must be above reproach,' etc. Desiring a noble task is a mark of charity;[635] rank comes of its own, it is not striven for, and whatever rank falls to one's lot is turned wholly to the glory of Christ. Anyone who seeks a priestly office in order to receive fifteen thousand a year, to process surrounded by forty horses, to seize cities and fortresses, to be called duke or count, is desirous not of work but of wealth; but someone who mortifies his flesh with its vices and desires, who gathers the strength of the spirit by devout study, who instructs his heart with the doctrine of salvation, all with the object of being above reproach when he declares to the people the truth and law of the gospel, is truly desirous of a task that is the greatest of all and most pleasing to God but also the most difficult.[636]

It is exceedingly difficult not just because the philosophy it teaches is difficult, because the people is a beast with many heads,[637] because in every

* * * * *

631 Erasmus often employs this method of arguing in dialogic form, using a fictitious interlocutor; he explains this pedagogical device in book 3; see 852–4. For an extended example of this method, see *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 231–387.

632 1 Tim 3:1

633 See *Iliad* 24.729 and 2.243.

634 1 Tim 3:2–7

635 1 Tim 3:1

636 Erasmus expands the Ciceronian idea that if the training of the orator is the most difficult occupation, how much more difficult is the training of the Christian orator? See *De oratore* 1.2.6–1.6.23; *Orator* 1.1–2.6, *Brutus* 49.181–2. This theme will be repeated frequently in many ecclesiastical rhetorics that follow Erasmus' *Ecclesiastes*.

637 Horace *Epistles* 1.1.76. Erasmus uses this saying, 267 above.

class of men there are more bad than good, because many are called, few chosen,[638] but much more because all this business of the preacher has to be conducted not with weapons, not with tortures or dungeons, but with the tongue, not with cruelty but with gentleness, not with violence but with persuasion, not by inflicting ills but by enduring them, not by killing but by dying for the sheep.[639]

Naturally this undertaking requires a lofty soul and a heart trained in a philosophy like no other; this clearly is what the prophet calls 'a learned tongue,'[640] what St Paul means by διδακτικὸς εἶναι,[641] that is, 'being suited to teach.' No one is suited to teach the divine unless divinely taught.

But it is a cause of grief that we absurdly devote much greater attention to trivial human affairs than to that on which eternal human happiness depends; I am compelled to complain about this rather often because errors are made without bound and restraint thanks to this fault. I know that it was said by the Lord that the sons of this age are more prudent in their generation than the sons of light,[642] but we Christians, on whom Christ, the 'sun of justice,'[643] has shone, on whom the truth of the gospel has beamed, 'we are not the sons of night or of darkness but the sons of day';[644] hence it is the more disgraceful that among us judgments are made that are equally perverse. Who assigns a field for plowing to a tenant farmer unless he first knows that he is trained for agriculture?[645] Who hires a vine

* * * * *

638 Matt 20:16, 22:14

639 Cf John 10:1–8, 11:47–52, 15:12–13.

640 Isa 50:4

641 1 Tim 3:2 (Vulg *doctorem*); 2 Tim 2:24 (Vulg *docibilem*). Erasmus translates 1 Tim 3:2 as 'skilled in teaching' (*aptum ad docendum*) and 2 Tim 2:24 as 'suited to teach' (*propensum ad docendum*); see the notes in LB VI 934D n8 for 1 Tim 3:2 (*appositum ad docendum*); and LB VI 957E n42 for 2 Tim 2:24 (*idoneum ac paratum ad docendum*). Erasmus speaks of this as 'a special quality which must be looked for in a bishop. He has to have an aptitude and inclination for teaching ... the things which make us truly godly and truly Christian ...' (*Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Timotheum priorem* CWE 44 19); see also *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Timotheum secundam* CWE 44 48.

642 Luke 16:8

643 Mal 4:2

644 1 Thess 5:5

645 Erasmus demonstrates another variation on the rhetorical technique of argumentation, where, like Socrates, he uses questions that lead to an inescapable conclusion; here he argues that if we are careful in our choosing in matters of small importance, how much more should we be diligent in the matter of

dresser ignorant of tending vines? Who entrusts a wagon to someone untrained in driving? Who entrusts his horses to someone ignorant of this skill? Why do I talk of horses? We do not entrust a herd of pigs just to anyone but require a dependable, vigilant, and practised swineherd. We choose so carefully in frivolous matters, and we entrust the Lord's flock to anyone at all with no discrimination.[646] Similar folly is shown in the fact that many powerful people pick the trainers of their horses with greater discrimination than the educators of their children,[647] and princes often assign a magistracy with less careful attention than the tending of their falcons; but what we have said about discrimination applies more to princes, bishops, and patrons of benefices.

But others show a ridiculous modesty in taking up the divine functions. If someone were to say to a swordsman, 'Be a shipmaster,' he will answer, 'How can I? I've never seen the sea; the business is outside my arena.' If someone were to say to a shipmaster, 'Be a doctor; cure the diseases of the citizens,' he would refuse, asserting that he had not read Hippocrates or Galen.[648] If someone were to say to a farmer, 'Build me a house,' he is going to answer, 'I learned to guide a plow, not a trowel, axe, or rule.' And yet men thrust themselves to the priesthood, to the rank of pastor, who are much less suitable for the task they undertake than a swineherd is for piloting a ship or a shoemaker for administering medicine. Who is so shameless that he would desire to be considered a builder when he has never taken a chisel in hand? Who dares call himself a painter when he knows neither how to grind colours nor how to draw a brush? Who claims the role of lutenist when he is absolutely ignorant of music? And yet men are found who take up the office of a pastor, who claim the duties of a bishop though

* * * * *

choosing a preacher, which is of greatest importance? He uses this type of argument throughout the treatise.

646 Erasmus often makes this point using similar comparisons; see especially John Chrysostom *On the Priesthood* 4.2 NPNF 1st series 9 63–4.

647 See *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 314. Erasmus employs the same arguments in regard to the parents' selection of a teacher for youth.

648 Hippocrates and Galen were the two most eminent authorities on medicine in the ancient world, whose authority was still uncontested in Erasmus' day. For Hippocrates (the Asclepiad of Cos), see OCD 518; for Galen (of Pergamum), see OCD 454–5. Erasmus emended the Greek text of Galen and translated three of his treatises in the five-volume edition published by Aldus in 1525; Erasmus' Latin translations were published by Froben in May 1526; see B. Ebels-Hoving and E.J. Ebels 'Erasmus and Galen' in *Erasmus of Rotterdam: The Man and the Scholar* ed J. Sperna Weiland and W.Th.M. Frijhoff (Leiden 1988) 132–42.

no more suited than 'if you put a psaltery on a tall slave,'[649] as the poet says.

I see that some will reply here, 'Anyone who acts through another is seen as acting for himself; it is in this sense that kings sail and rich men build.' I grant this, but the former are not called shipmasters and the latter are not called builders; yet some priests, though they have no quality worthy of a priest, still pride themselves on this title, demand the honour and the stipend due to priests, desire to be called and to be considered that which they are not. St Jerome, expounding Malachi, somewhere warns such men in these words: 'The priest who pleads a careful ignorance in other matters, a negligent one in the Holy Scriptures, boasts in vain of the high office whose works he does not show.'[650]

But some bishops do have an excuse in these times, a matter about which we shall say something a little later.[651] But I can hardly find a plea by which to excuse those who heap benefices upon benefices, and likewise the pastors who conduct their office through a substitute contractor, as does that substitute through a substitute down to the third or fourth: indeed, he does not conduct his office at all when the last substitute is the worst of all, as is frequently the case.[652] But this is an old complaint about bishops and priests, which is not part of my intention to revive here, especially in these days when bad priests are scorned to such an extent that even the good ones are despised by the laity. If warning helps, they have been warned enough in the canonical Scriptures and the writings of the church Fathers and in the very decrees of the popes.[653] Today one must urge rather that all the people change their lives for the better and ask God with constant prayers

* * * * *

649 See *Adagia* III v 43. The line is from Aulus Persius Flaccus (AD 34–62), Roman satirical poet, and summarizes Erasmus' point that one does not take up the office of bishop without full qualifications; see Persius *Satires* 5.95 *sambucam citius caloni aptaveris alto*.

650 Jerome *In Malachiam* CCSL 76A 918:217–19 (on Mal 2:7).

651 Erasmus concedes that bishops cannot do all the preaching themselves but must delegate this responsibility to competent preachers because of the changed conditions in the city; bishops can often do much better by providing their dioceses with suitable preachers than carrying out the duty of preaching by themselves; nevertheless, they too must be learned and able to preach; see 343–5 below.

652 On this abuse in England, see Robert C. Palmer *Selling the Church: The English Parish in Law, Commerce, and Religion, 1350–1550* (Chapel Hill, NC 2002).

653 See 320 above where Erasmus lists the terrifying punishments facing those negligent in the office of preacher. For the 'decrees of the popes,' see CIC 2.3.4 I 460, 3.5.5 465.

to turn the minds of princes and priests to what is both pleasing to Christ and salutary for the people.

If the people show themselves disposed to be taught, God will not allow a dearth of teachers. For it often happens that, because of the people's stubborness, God unleashes a tyrant instead of a prince, a hypocrite instead of a bishop, so that they may be scourged rather than healed through them;[654] so to the people of Israel, when they demanded a king to replace the very mild judge Samuel, he gave the tyrant Saul.[655] Holy Writ, though it does not approve of the speaker, does not disapprove of his statement that '[God] makes a hypocrite reign because of the sins of the people.'[656] What he calls a hypocrite Zechariah called an idol and a foolish shepherd,[657] whom the Lord professes he will rouse up, expressly because of the rebellion of the people; and, according to the prophecy of Micah, a lying spirit is sent by the Lord to deceive King Ahab.[658] Those unwilling to heed givers of good advice deserve to learn their own foolishness through affliction by the wicked.[659]

Those who turn the writings of the ancients against priests and bishops ought to remember that in certain countries the church now has a different status, perhaps brought on by compelling causes.[660] The ferocity of

* * * * *

654 Erasmus posits a God who demands docility in his people before he sends them worthy preachers, which somewhat contradicts the idea that God sends preachers in order to correct the vices of the people and foster docility to hearing the word. Erasmus supports his view by recalling God's punishment of the behaviour of the Israelites, who continuously proved 'stubborn' (eg Exod 32:9; Deut 9:13; Mic 6:16). Erasmus sees God's punishment on his age in princes and bishops who act as tyrants and hypocrites.

655 1 Samuel 8

656 Job 34:30. These words are uttered by Elihu, Job's friend, in his second discourse on God's justice, providence, and power. Erasmus judges Elihu harshly (*persona non probata*) because he is not a bad person, though he mistakenly believes Job impugned the absolute justice of God and brought on himself divine punishment. Erasmus is calling attention to certain locutions in Scripture where true utterances are spoken by the ungodly, like Balaam ('a base man' [*homo reprobatus*]) and Caiphas who says, 'It is expedient that one man die for the people' (John 11:50); Erasmus notes how true the utterance is though the speaker was not right with the Lord. See 389.

657 Zec 11:16–17

658 2 Chron 18:21–2

659 Cf Mic 6:16.

660 Erasmus takes a stand here against Reformers who would abolish bishops and priests, claiming they 'turn' (or 'twist' [*torquent*]) the Scriptures to demonstrate that bishops are not what they were at the time of Paul. Erasmus' view

the Germans has resulted in their bishops being fortified against popular uprisings by wealth, arms, fortresses, and secular authority, so that force and fear of trouble might restrain the common people, who were unwilling to obey salutary warnings. Among the English, bishops or abbots have no secular authority, though a good part of the wealth is in the hands of ecclesiastics; the same, I think, prevails among the Spanish. The Greeks still preserve an ancient frugality of which clear traces can be seen even today in Italy, despite the pomp and fanfare of secular authority that have long since made inroads there particularly among those who should have rebuked the desires of others. It would indeed be desirable that all bishops be only bishops, armed with spiritual weapons,[661] rich in spiritual wealth,[662] and that the greater each was in rank, the more free he would be from earthly cares; in turn, the people would be tractable and compliant to such bishops. But it is only fair that they should be more understanding of the German bishops on the ground that they did not invent that model themselves but received it by tradition from ancient times; moreover, the authority of many prelates extends so wide that if they were freed as far as possible from all earthly cares, they could still not preach in all their towns, since today a single city requires several preachers.[663] Hence I am all the more amazed that there was only one bishop and teacher at Milan or at Constantinople, Ambrose in the former, Chrysostom in the latter. And just as the existence of a single Roman pope to preside over all the churches is useful for fending off schisms,[664] so for the same reason it is appropriate to have many cities

* * * * *

is that the status (*status*) of bishops has been conditioned by the historical circumstances in which the episcopate developed among the various countries of Europe; though below he wishes that bishops truly be bishops (see 351 below), he does not advocate abolishing such configurations but acknowledges the historical result as being due to the specific temper of the peoples of Europe. Erasmus states below: 'Established usage can be excused and ought to be tolerated'; see 351.

661 Eph 6:11–17

662 Matt 6:20–1; Luke 12:33–4

663 Erasmus acknowledges the practical constraints on bishops of his own day; because they cannot possibly preach to the faithful in such large cities, they need to delegate this office to suitable clergy.

664 Here Erasmus gives another small, but important, clue to his ecclesiology; he views it as 'expedient' that the bishop of Rome 'preside over all the churches' to 'fend off schisms.' Papal authority therefore is crucial but restricted to working with fellow bishops for consensus in matters of doctrine and morality. The role of the bishop is, above all, to preach and to provide preachers who are 'suitable and διδακτικοί' (see 344 below) and to remove those unsuited. Erasmus

obey a single bishop. But he ought nevertheless to be trained in Scripture so that he too might preach on occasion and be able to admit other suitable people to that office; his example will stimulate some, his judgment will remove the unsuitable. And, in my opinion at least, such a bishop would make better use of his time if through himself and his staff he took constant and watchful care to ensure that pastors who are suitable and διδακτικοί [good at teaching] be put in charge of each church, that those who are clearly useless be removed from that office, than if he devoted himself wholly to the business of preaching.

It will be most conducive to providing a supply of such men if he ensures that youths of good potential are trained in public academies and if he admits to the rank of presbyter only those who have given unambiguous evidence that they will one day be able to serve as a good preacher; for this is the source from which the greatest part of the church's calamities flows.[665] A bishop cannot preach in all the churches, yet a single bishop can take care of all the churches by finding a reliable pastor. That perhaps cannot come about suddenly, yet it can happen slowly and gradually. If someone becomes a bishop who is more suited to administration than to teaching, by attending to this responsibility he will easily compensate for what he lacks, and he will devote himself to this with greater zeal[666] if he reflects that that supreme pastor will impute to him all the failings of those to whom he has delegated his role. Bishops then ought to make this first and foremost among their concerns.[667] Intelligent princes exercise the greatest care in acquiring

* * * * *

perhaps comes closest to articulating the function of the ideal pope in his description below of Pope Gregory the Great (590–604); see 355 below. For Erasmus' ecclesiology, see Cornelis Augustijn 'The Ecclesiology of Erasmus' in *Scrinium* II 135–56.

665 Erasmus' advice anticipates the central concern of the Fathers at Trent to emphasize the role of the bishop in instructing good preachers within the diocese and approving them before they preach. Erasmus speaks of training youth in 'public academies'; but in book3 CWE 68 passim he is more specific in describing the kind of programme most conducive to instructing youth for preaching. Erasmus' example of David of Burgundy, once bishop of Utrecht, suggests how far from that ideal many European dioceses were at the time of the Reformation. On David of Burgundy see CEBR I 226–7.

666 Zeal is the mark of an excellent bishop. This theme is echoed repeatedly after Trent in the numerous ecclesiastical rhetorics that follow *Ecclesiastes*. See McGinness *Right Thinking* 41 and 44.

667 Chomarat calls attention to Trent's use of Erasmus' words and ideas: 'Bishops then ought to make this first and foremost (*primam ac praecipuam*) among their concerns'; see ASD V-4 133 22–3nn. Erasmus' ideas and language are even more

trustworthy generals tested in war to whom to entrust their army, convinced that success in war depends upon them, and they do not consider it a serious loss if the common soldier and nameless ranks fall, so long as their energetic generals are unharmed; how much more care should be taken to ensure that the Lord's flock has appropriate shepherds. This is no light matter; so many thousands of souls are in danger, for whose freedom Christ shed his own blood when he handed himself over to death to give them life, but the bishop himself is in danger above all since he will render an account to the Lord for each sheep.[668] Accordingly, if a bishop ever allows himself any idleness, let him allow it somewhere else instead; if any laxness, let him be lax anywhere but in this business, which is by far the most perilous of all. It is not a sufficient excuse if a bishop says, 'I delegated that to my substitutes and officials,' since he must vouch for their integrity as well; if he punishes them when they are caught in embezzlement, so much the more justly should they be punished if they have conducted this work in bad faith.

It would not be out of place to relate here what befell David,[669] formerly bishop of Utrecht, the son of Duke Philip the Good.[670] He was a supremely learned man and trained in theology, something that is quite rare in nobles and in bishops, especially of that region, burdened as they are with their secular authority. He had heard that among the many admitted to holy orders very few were literate. He determined to investigate the matter more closely; he ordered a chair placed for himself in the hall where those to be examined were admitted, proposed questions personally to each according to the dignity of the rank that they sought: easier ones for those who were to be subdeacons, somewhat more difficult ones for deacons, theological ones for presbyters. Are you wondering how it turned out? He debarred

* * * * *

embedded in the decrees of the Council of Trent; see Session 6 *Decretum secundum publicatum in eadem quinta sessione super lectione et praedicatione*. Tanner II 669: 'This is the chief task of the bishops'; see also Tanner II 763 for Session 24, Canon 4. Significantly, *Ecclesiastes* uses the word *praecipuum* almost exclusively for this function of the bishops; see also McGinness 'Erasmian Legacy' 98–102.

668 See Heb 13:17; John 10:11–16, 21:15–17; cf Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2–4.

669 David of Burgundy (c 1427–96), bishop in 1456. Chomarat notes that Erasmus knew this local anecdote because when he was ten years old he had been a choirboy at Utrecht. For David of Burgundy see CEBR I 226–7; see also Schoeck (1) 109–10.

670 Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy (1396–1467); see Richard Vaughan *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy* (New York 1970); and CEBR I 228–9.

all but three. Those who usually preside over these affairs thought it would be a great disgrace to the church if only three were admitted instead of three hundred; the bishop, who had an impetuous nature, replied that it would be a greater disgrace to the church if asses, and creatures more stupid than any ass, were admitted into it instead of men. Those who reap some profit from this urged him to moderate his opinion, bearing in mind that this age does not produce Pauls or Jeromes – instead, such men as the time does offer must be accepted; the bishop persisted, saying that he was not asking for Pauls and Jeromes but would not admit asses in place of men. Here they had to resort to their final trick; it was applied. What was it? 'If you are intending to continue as you are beginning,' they said, 'you must increase our salaries, for without these asses we have no other source of livelihood.' This battering ram beat down the prelate's noble soul; yet the ram could have been beaten back in many ways: 'Salaries are given to you not for luxury and ostentation but for a sober life; what we give is enough for this.' But this remark could perhaps be turned back against a bishop who receives a stipend from the church for a decent living, not for the noisy display of a satrap; it would therefore have been more noble to say, 'If anything is lacking to your needs, it will be made up from elsewhere, even from my own stipend, so long as the church is not tainted by such ministers.'

Generals experienced in war would rather lead out a small band suitable for combat than a huge crowd of useless soldiers; what does it matter whether the church has only a very few priests suitable for ecclesiastical service or an infinite crowd of useless ones who would sooner burden the church than support it? All desire the stipends of the church, few or none desire the church's work. They want to be fed, not to feed; take away the fodder, and you will see very few aspiring to ecclesiastical ranks.

Need I mention that the church would need fewer if each performed only his necessary and proper functions? Deacons would read aloud the sacred lections, presbyters would teach the gospel and assist the bishops in administering the sacraments. Now priests are consecrated for singing, which was once the role of the laity, and as mass priests; both would be more tolerable if they were confined strictly to public churches. In some regions individual houses now keep a chapel and priests privately,[671] and everywhere,

* * * * *

671 Erasmus refers here to the widespread practice of large wealthy landowners having private chapels and resident chaplains. This not only allowed family members to practice their devotions but kept them separate from the community church where regular religious services took place. Privatizing religious rites in this way de-emphasized the unity of the Christian community.

just as suffragan bishops[672] are created who could be hired by any bishop at all, so presbyters are consecrated who have no prescribed stipend but can be hired by the wife of any tanner to conduct his mistress to church, hand her the missal and genuflect three times, then lead her home again with a similar ritual. And they are created for this purpose at a jump,[673] as the saying goes, and before the legal age,[674] so long as a fee is paid out. Paul wants younger widows to marry and wants only those who are truly widows to be enrolled, in order to prevent the church from being burdened.[675] Why should what the Apostle established in women's ministries not be done in the higher orders that burden the church more, so that only those who are truly deacons, that is, ministers of the church, are received as deacons, only those who are truly presbyters, pure in life, grave in authority, salutary in learning, are admitted as presbyters? What a crowd of presbyters we now see in some places if the corpse of an ostentatious magnate is to be buried! You might see hundreds on hand to sing the dirges, to celebrate the rites. If the Gospel needs to be preached, how scarce they are; there you would hardly find one. How much more justly would those who wage war over the denying of tithes, angrily fulminating against those who cheat churches, be roused against those who by living luxuriously on ecclesiastical revenues burden and shame the whole church, not only among the Christian population but also among those who are outside the community of the church? For these people judge the whole church from the ministers of the church. Therefore, the bishop who genuinely favours the good of the church should be especially vigilant in this regard. If he does this, he will be readily forgiven the fact that he does not teach the philosophy of the gospel himself, and that old

* * * * *

672 Ie assistant bishops who receive their commission and stipend from the archbishop or bishop of a diocese.

673 'At a jump' (*per saltum*); Erasmus refers to the irregular practice of ordained individuals who skip over one or more of the required stages of advancement in the offices of the ecclesiastical hierarchy (subdeacon, deacon, priest, bishop).

674 Chomarat states that the canonical age was at least thirty years. The Third Lateran Council, however, fixed the age for ordination to the priesthood at twenty five. As Erasmus notes, there were many dispensations given that allowed younger males to be ordained earlier. See Tanner I 212, Third Lateran Council (1179), Canon 3; and Tanner II 766, Council of Trent, Session 24, Canon 12.

675 1 Tim 5:14–16. See 1 Tim 5:11–16 and Erasmus' understanding of Paul's counsel regarding young widows and the support of older widows in *Paraphrasis in 1 Timotheum* CWE 44 29–31. Also Luke Timothy Johnson *The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 35 (New York c 2001).

song of the lawyers will be valid, that 'whoever acts through others seems to act through himself,'[676] nor will the advice of the old man in the comedy seem absurd, who, when he saw an old neighbour constantly carrying something in a field, digging, plowing, and hoeing, advised him as follows: 'All that effort of your own that you spend in working, / You would get more done if you spent it in training them.'[677] Similarly, the bishop whose authority extends far will produce more profit if he devotes himself entirely to putting suitable pastors in charge of each church and to restraining those in office than if he carefully administers one or two churches himself.[678]

This attention would have to be applied not only to towns but also to villages and monasteries. The priests of villages and hamlets, I think, are called *corepiscopi*[679] in the ancient canons;[680] I believe that one should

* * * * *

676 The saying is one of many fundamental principles of law (*regulae iuris*), this one going back as far as Ulpian (c 170–228). Pope Boniface VIII (1294–1303) inserted eighty-nine such *regulae* in the last title (XII) of the sixth book of the *Decretals* (*Liber sextus decretalium*), which he published in 1298; in Erasmus' time the *editio princeps* was printed at Mainz by Johann Fust and Peter Schöffer in 1465. See *Regula* 68: *potest quis per alium quod potest facere per se ipsum*; and *Regula* 72: *qui facit per alium est perinde ac si faciat per se ipsum*. A similar *regula* appears in *The Digest of Justinian* ed Theodor Mommsen, Paul Krueger, and Alan Watson (Philadelphia 1985) 302: 'A person who has managed a tutelage through the agency of another is held to have managed it himself.' See also *Dokumente zur Causa Lutheri* ed Peter Fabisch and Erwin Iserloh I (Münster 1988–91) 162 75 verso–76 recto: 'Punctum 6: Pontifex indubitatus nedum a Concilio, sed neque a toto Mundo potest iure deponi. Cum enim ab eo in Ecclesia sit omnis auctoritas, si ab aliquo iuridice deponeretur, utique a seipso deponeretur, licet per alium, quia quod quis per alium facit, per seipsum facere videtur.'

677 Terence *Heauton timorumenos* (*Self-Tormentor*) 69, 73–4. The 'old man' is Chremes speaking to another old man, Menedemus. There is no mention in this passage of 'hoeing' (*sarrientem*); Erasmus is likely trying to recall it from memory.

678 Below Erasmus recalls his acquaintance with William Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, who excelled in this practice. See CEBR III 427–31.

679 *Corepiscopi, chorepiscopi* were fully consecrated bishops in country areas of the Eastern church in the fourth century but with restricted powers; they could only ordain the lower ranks of clergy and were subject to their diocesan. By the thirteenth century the position disappears. In the Western church they worked in missionary districts in Germany; they disappear by the twelfth century. See *chorepiscopus* in ODCC 331. Chomarat (ASD V-4 136:110–11 and 137 109n) notes that Erasmus' orthography is correct, though the etymology is inexact: χῶρα means 'place' and a *chorepiscopos* would hold the 'place' of the bishop; he is not a bishop of the country district.

680 See *Codex canonum ecclesiasticorum et constitutorum sanctae sedis apostolicae* (PL 56 709 A): *qui in vices et villis constitui sunt chorepiscopi*; CIC 1, 2, 68, 3, 254:

write *chorepiscopi*, because χώρα in Greek sometimes means 'countryside' or 'field.' The more uneducated a farming community is, the more it needs someone to season it with the salt of the gospel,[681] and in ancient times monks and holy virgins used to hear the bishop teaching daily in common churches; now, since nuns are shut up and confined at home, care would have to be taken to ensure that they have people there to instruct them in sacred learning, to inspire them, to console and admonish them.[682] Why else do we see so much superstition instead of true devotion,[683] so much coldness and sloth instead of charity[684] even in well-regulated monasteries, if not because they do not feed daily upon the word of God?[685] From this, faith grows strong; from this, charity grows warm; from this, the desire for heavenly life wells up; without these, the choice of food, dress, songs, and other ceremonies tend more truly to superstition than to devotion.

Please consider here whether a man on whose shoulders weighs the care of so many cities and of so many churches has leisure for hunting, fowling, gambling, elaborate banquets, etc. Everyone will be able to judge at home what this is like. What a worrying business it is for the patriarch

* * * * *

chorepiscopi – in vices ordinarii possunt – minores tantummodo ordines tribuunt. See 'Chorbishop' NCE III 525–6.

681 Cf Matt 5:13; Mark 9:49.

682 Cf 2 Tim 3:16.

683 Erasmus makes clear that where the word is not preached competently the danger of superstition is always great, for believers mistake the forms for the substance or meaning that the ceremonies signify. Erasmus' criticisms of superstitious practices, external ceremonies, and ritualistic attitudes that have been so deeply embedded among Christians are well familiar; see eg *Moria* CWE 27 113–5 and *Enchiridion* CWE 66 73–83; see also Ep 1558 to Willibald Pirckheimer, especially line 66, and Jacques Chomarat 'Superstitio, religio et impietas' in *Moreana* 21 83/84 (Nov 1984) 151–6.

684 Cf Matt 24:12.

685 This idea will become a prominent theme at Trent; see Session 5 'Second decree: on instruction and preaching' no 11, Tanner II 669: 'Archpriests also, ordinary priests and any others who have some control over parochial and other churches, and have the care of souls, are to feed with the words of salvation the people committed to their charge. This they should do either personally or, if they are legitimately impeded, through others who are competent, by teaching at least on Sundays and solemn feasts, according to their own and their hearers' capacity, what it is necessary for all to know with a view to salvation, by proclaiming briefly and with ease of expression the vices they must avoid and the virtues they must cultivate so as to escape eternal punishment and gain the glory of heaven.'

of a modest household, with a wife, some children, and servants, to keep this small household under control, though he has supreme authority over them not only to command but also to confine and beat and disown,[686] while a bishop, as bishop, has only the authority to teach, advise, reprimand, beseech, and console.[687] But St Chrysostom in his book *De sacerdotio* shows with equal eloquence and erudition how difficult a business it would be if today also individual bishops were in charge of individual cities.[688] Admittedly he wrote when not yet a bishop, but once he had been dragged to this office, he discovered in the event that his prophecy was quite true.[689] If only the violence of princes, the rebelliousness of clerics, the insensibility of the people, the uproar of heresies[690] were less today! How much trouble then do we believe it is when twenty rich and populous cities, in addition to towns and villages, owe obedience to a single bishop.[691] Even supposing that burden to be light, four or five such bishoprics, with some added abbacies, are laid on the shoulders of a single man. Who would not acknowledge

* * * * *

686 On the authority of the father in the family, see Steven E. Ozment *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge 1983). Erasmus qualifies the right of the father to beat a child; see *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 326, where he speaks of being flogged as a boy for an act he did not commit and how this caused him to lose his love for studies.

687 See 2 Tim 3:16, 4:2.

688 See John Chrysostom *De sacerdotio* (*On the Priesthood*) NPNF 1st series 9 25–83. Erasmus edited this work; see Ep 1558. Erasmus relies heavily on Chrysostom's *De sacerdotio* for much of his discussion of the priestly office. See PG 48 623–92.

689 John Chrysostom (c 347–407) became bishop of Constantinople on 26 February 398. He had written *De sacerdotio* probably while still a deacon (386), or possibly just after he was ordained a priest at Antioch (387). For the difficulties one faces as bishop, see especially *De sacerdotio* book 2. And for his perils as bishop of Constantinople, see J.N.D. Kelly *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom, Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (Ithaca 1995), especially 104–44; Rudolf Brändle *Jean Chrysostome, 'saint Jean Bouche d'or' (349–407): christianisme et politique au IVe siècle* (Paris 2003) 79.

690 Erasmus speaks only generally of contemporary heresies. Here he is likely referring to what he sees as the proliferation of so many various 'errors' while writing this treatise on preaching. 'Heresy' has a specific meaning for Erasmus; see book 4 CWE 68 1048: 'I use the term heresy not for any error at all but for the willful malice that disturbs the peace of the church with perverse dogmas for the sake of some advantage.'

691 Erasmus' solution to this problem is to remove the abuse of plurality of benefices and the jurisdiction of a single bishop over numerous well-populated towns, as well as insist that bishops regularly fulfil their divine duties as pastors of Christ's flock.

that this burden surpasses human strength? And yet these too are doubled by the addition of the secular authority. It is particularly difficult to be a good king; to be a devout prelate even to one city is much more difficult. How heavy then is the burden carried by a man who must be at the same time both a good bishop and a good prince to so many cities and so many regions? I do not make these remarks to castigate today's bishops but to show what sobriety and vigilance is required of them. Some of these things can be excused on honourable grounds; eagerness for concord and fear of sedition urged that several cities should be entrusted to one metropolitan, while the savagery of the population forced the addition of wealth and secular authority. The Irish are said to be like this even today,[692] and Germany was once more prone to warfare than to philosophy before she lowered her neck to Christ's yoke and was softened by liberal training – I only wish no traces of her ancient ferocity now remained! So far, then, established usage can be excused and ought to be tolerated; but I can hardly find grounds on which to excuse one man seeking several bishoprics, one priest seeking several benefices, unless we say that this proceeds not from avarice, not from ambition but from a certain abundance of charity by which they desire to benefit the greatest number.[693] But these things too are now done openly and with approval; nor am I unaware how powerful, how tyrannical a thing is a custom once received into public usage.

Accordingly, since it is better to leave this to the deity and to fate, all ought to take to heart that it should not be the last of their secular concerns to delegate to suitable men the duties that they cannot fulfil themselves. But favouritism and avarice, those worst of counsellors, should not be admitted to these deliberations. There is a relative who seeks a διοίκησις [diocese];[694] let love for the bride of Christ overcome the affection of kinship. If a prince puts forward a favoured candidate, let the interest of the highest prince take precedence with you. Finally, let the greatness of your power enable you to fend off those that try to break in, to expel those that have entered.

* * * * *

692 Erasmus never visited Ireland; it is likely his knowledge of the Irish church derives from what he heard while in England, much of which we might assume derives ultimately from Gerald of Wales. See the introduction to *Topographia Hiberniae* (*The Topography of Ireland*) (Middlesex repr 1982) 11–18, especially 13. For the Germans before the coming of Christianity, see Tacitus *Germania* 13–14; Caesar *Bellum Gallicum* 1.1.3–4, 1.27–52, 2.1–4, etc; Seneca *De ira* 1.11.3–4.

693 Cf 1 Tim 3:1; 1 Cor 9:15–18. The comment, we might suppose, is given with no small dose of irony.

694 An example of nepotism.

Let your wealth enable you to provide for some churches, on your own if necessary, to advance with kindness those who display a noble character, to found colleges for this very purpose,[695] to restore those that have failed, so that chosen talents may be trained there, not just for logical argument but much more for preaching;[696] for we see it happening now that the great part of those who receive long training in theological disputations come out clever in argument, but very, very few suited to preaching.

Here there comes to mind a man who deserves to be remembered for all time, William Warham,[697] archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, a theologian not in name but in fact, for he was a doctor of both civil and canon law,[698] grew famous from his successful conduct of several embassies, and became an intimate and friend of Henry VII,[699] a prince of great discretion. By these steps he rose to the pinnacle of the church of Canterbury, whose rank is first in that island. To this burden, quite heavy in itself, was added another more heavy; he was compelled to take on the office of chancellor, which among the English is positively royal. Out of respect he alone, when he went forth in public, was preceded by a royal crown with the royal sceptre placed upon it, for he was like the eye, the mouth, and the right hand of the king and was the highest judge in the whole British realm. He conducted this office for many years with such skill that you would say that he had been born to the business and was occupied by no other concern; but he was also so vigilant and alert in matters regarding religion and his ecclesiastical functions that you would say he was distracted by no other responsibilities. He had time enough to fulfil religiously his regular quota of prayers, to say mass almost every day, to hear two or three masses besides,

* * * * *

695 For Erasmus' idea of these colleges for training young men to preach, see 151–5.

696 Erasmus alludes to the importance of episcopal patronage for assisting worthy but indigent youth, and also insists upon the study of Scripture and the humanities as the educational purpose of such colleges. Elsewhere Erasmus emphasizes that such colleges should not be exclusively given over to dialectic for teaching theology, but the subject should be taught as part of the standard curriculum for future preachers. See book 2 CWE 68 468–74.

697 William Warham, archbishop of Canterbury (1450–22 August 1532), became lord chancellor and archbishop of Canterbury in 1503. Erasmus portrays Warharm as a model bishop. See CEBR III 427–31, and *Colloquia* (*Peregrinatio religionis ergo* CWE 40 669 n155. This part of *Ecclesiastes* therefore was written after 22 August 1532; see Allen III 631: 'for the passage occurs (f.35) in continuous composition and cannot be considered as an insertion.'

698 This is a doctor of both laws (*utriusque iuris*).

699 Henry VII, king of England (b 1457; ruled 1485–1509); CEBR II 117–18

to try cases, to receive legations, to advise the king if something of serious import had arisen at court, to visit churches as often as circumstances required an arbitrator, often to receive two hundred guests; finally, his leisure was devoted to reading. A single man had enough energy and time for such varied concerns because he gave no portion of it to hunting, none to gambling, none to idle stories, none to luxury or pleasure; for him some pleasant reading or a conversation with a learned man took the place of all these amusements. Though he sometimes entertained bishops, dukes, and counts, yet the meal was always over within the span of an hour. It is incredible to note how far he himself abstained from pleasures in the midst of the splendid pomp that that rank demands. He rarely tasted wine; but when he was in his seventies, he often drank a very weak fermented beverage that they call 'beer,'[700] and even that quite sparingly. Moreover, though he ate very little food, he nevertheless enlivened the whole party with his friendly countenance and jolly conversation; whether he had eaten or not, you would have seen the same sobriety. He refrained entirely from banquets, or, if some familiar friends had come (among whom we were counted), he did sit at table, but in such a way that he touched almost no food; if such friends were not available, he would spend on prayers or reading the time that was to be given to dinner. And just as he himself abounded in witticisms that were wonderfully pleasant but free from bite or frivolity, so he delighted in the freer jests of his friends; he shunned scurrility and insult as people do a snake.[701] In this way that excellent man made his days abundantly long, whose brevity many allege as an excuse; yet those who continually complain that they lack the time for serious business waste a good part of the day, sometimes of the night as well, in unnecessary activity. But to return to the point that led me to interject this digression, according to the custom of these times, he was required, besides the ample household that he was compelled to keep, to devote time also to the royal court and to the secular business of the entire kingdom. And although it is not customary there today for the highest prelates to preach, yet he abundantly made up for what had been lost in this part of his duty by a twofold vigilance, partly by ensuring that no useless person was ever put in charge of the Lord's flock, partly by using his own liberality to support in the study of literature many whom he hoped would eventually bear good fruit; his liberality towards them was so free that at his death he left no cash on hand at all but a considerable

* * * * *

700 'Beer' (*cervisiam quam illi biriam vocant*)

701 For 'he shunned . . . as people do a snake' (*tam horrebat quam quisquam ab angui*), see *Adagia* II ix 63 *Odit cane peius et angue* 'Hates worse than dog and snake.'

debt, though he provided the means of paying it off. I say this not at all in flattery; I loved him while he lived, no less do I love him dead, for what I loved in him has not perished. If I were to count up all that he was ready to give me, his liberality towards me was immense; if we were to calculate what I received, it is modest indeed. He conferred upon me but a single benefice; or rather he did not give it but thrust it upon me against my constant refusal, since it was of such a kind that the flock required a pastor, which I could not be because of my ignorance of the language. When he had changed it to a pension and sensed that I accepted that small sum grudgingly because it was collected from a population to which I was bringing no good, the outstandingly devout man consoled me, saying, 'What? Would you consider preaching to one small rustic congregation an important service? Now through your books you teach all pastors with far greater profit, and do you deem it unfair if a little of the church stipend returns to you? I take that anxiety upon myself; I shall see to it that the church lacks for nothing.' And so he did; for after removing the person to whom I had resigned the office (he was his assistant, a man distracted by various responsibilities), he put in charge another young man knowledgeable in theology, of proven and honourable character. He so loved, so venerated the Reverend Doctor John Fisher, bishop of Rochester,[702] because he showed himself a true bishop in all the offices worthy of a prelate but especially in his zeal for teaching the people,[703] that it seemed that Fisher was the metropolitan, he himself the suffragan. Now that my patron is deceased, I can offer this testimony without suspicion of flattery. He does not need my praise, and I expect no reward from him for my flattery. Rather, I have offered these recollections

* * * * *

702 John Fisher (Fischer), bishop of Rochester (1469–22 June 1535). John Fisher was made bishop of Rochester in 1504. At the time Erasmus was about to publish *Ecclesiastes* (July 1535), Fisher was executed by Henry VIII for refusing to accept the king's remarriage. See CEBR I 36–9. See also Edward L. Surtz *The Works and Days of John Fisher: An Introduction to the Position of St. John Fisher (1469–1535), Bishop of Rochester, in the English Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge, Mass 1967); *Humanism, Reform and the Reformation: The Career of Bishop John Fisher* ed Brendan Bradshaw and Eamon Duffy (Cambridge 1989). For Erasmus' knowledge in 1535 of Fisher's fate, see Schoeck (2) 339–40; see also Kleinhans 29–31.

703 'A true bishop ... especially in his zeal for teaching the people' (*tum praecipue studio docendi populum verum praestaret episcopum*); this is another instance of Erasmus' exclusive use of the word *praecipuum* 'special' or 'particular' in application to the teaching office of the bishop. 'Zeal' becomes the mark of the true preacher in the post-Tridentine era; see McGinness *Right Thinking* 41, 83–4; and 266, 277, 337, 344 above.

in order to present an example that the priests of today can follow[704] and easily make up the damage done to their office when the distraction of various duties leaves them no free time for preaching, and to show how they can make their days longer in order to have sufficient time and energy and good health for their varied concerns. Christian charity is an energetic and active thing; once it has seized someone, it is remarkable what varied responsibilities he can be equal to undertaking. For I fear that the mass of men, who are always complaining that they lack leisure, would find, if they made a true reckoning of their daily activity, that the better and greater part of their time was spent either on foolish pleasures or on frivolous trifles; since they have ample supply and surplus of leisure for these, it is a disgrace to plead lack of time as an excuse in the one responsibility for which they should have forgotten all other business and been wholeheartedly free.

But there is an example ready at hand, this one still more illustrious: St Gregory, the first pope of that name.[705] Though his frame was frail and his health unsteady, he was sufficient by himself to carry out so many duties: he celebrated holy rites, preached before the people, sometimes several times a day, sat to try cases, maintained a school of letters, composed rituals and chants for the church, wrote so many tomes, so many letters; he taught the catechumens, examined them after their instruction, initiated in the sacraments, scrutinized the candidates for initiation to test their suitability; he settled the conflicts of kings, opposed those causing schism, put suitable pastors in charge of each church, and, not satisfied with this, sent out men endowed with the apostolic spirit to distant regions to pacify savage and wild races and prepare them for the philosophy of the gospel and the discipline of the church;[706] meanwhile he was no more slack in his private duties, visiting the sick, rebuking the delinquent, goading the idle, consoling

* * * * *

704 Erasmus repeats his intention to present these two bishops as models of how prelates should live and carry out their divinely entrusted office. For models of the ideal bishop, see Hubert Jedin and Giuseppe Alberigo *Il tipo ideale di vescovo secondo la riforma cattolica* (Brescia 1985). Below Erasmus vividly describes the virtues of the good bishop, which likely had an impact on Trent's presentation of the holders of this most important office.

705 Gregory I, 'the Great,' pope (590–604). See Carole Straw *Gregory the Great: Perfection in Imperfection* (Berkeley 1988); and Robert A. Markus *Gregory the Great and His World* (Cambridge 1997). On his infirmities, see Gregory's letter to Leander of Seville in preface to the *Moralia in Iob* CCSL 143 1–7.

706 Erasmus' reference is to Pope Gregory I's mission of Augustine of Canterbury to King Ethelbert at Kent in 597. See Bede *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (*Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*) 1.23–34.

the afflicted, encouraging the timid, aiding the oppressed, restoring quarrelling parties to concord, attending the dying. How did it happen that such a frail frame was equal to carrying out so many functions? Burning charity of course provided strength, and his time, truly the most precious resource, as someone has said, was dispensed so parsimoniously that no portion of it was wasted. This is how St Basil,[707] with his body diseased, how Chrysostom,[708] how St Augustine,[709] already in delicate health and burdened by old age, was sufficient to the church's many difficult tasks. The ancients said astutely that parsimony is a great source of revenue,[710] for it makes modest resources suffice a frugal man even to the point of liberality, while for the prodigal they would not be enough even for a modest living. The former bestows generously from moderate resources; the latter has not enough from ample funds to placate a creditor. Moreover, it is appropriate that just as nothing in human affairs is more precious than time, so nothing should be dispensed more circumspectly; but many now squander it as though there were nothing more worthless. If only all pastors would shape themselves to this image!

I know that today, because that lively and active charity has grown too chill[711] and the love of pleasures and the pursuit of secular authority and money have welled up, the various functions of the priest have been distributed among many persons, and sometimes absurdly, so that the highest function is delegated to the lowliest, the lowliest is reserved for the highest.

* * * * *

707 See 287 above for Basil, bishop of Caesarea (c 329–79), one of the four Doctors of the Eastern church, along with John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa. For details of Basil's condition, see Gregory of Nazianzus *Oration 43* 61 *Funebris oratio in laudem Basilii magni Caesareae in Cappadocia episcopi* (*Funeral Oration on the Great S. Basil, Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia*) in NPNF 2nd series 7 395–422 (especially 415); see SC 384 116–307 (par 61, 257–9). On Basil, see Philip Rousseau *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1994); for Chrysostom see J.N.D. Kelly *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom – Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (Ithaca 1995); and for Augustine, see Peter Brown *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1967; rev ed 2000).

708 See Sozomon 8.9 404–5: 'John had, by rigorous asceticism, rendered himself liable to pain in the head and stomach, and was thus prevented from being present at some of the choicest symposia' (405).

709 For Augustine's health, see Peter Brown *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1967; rev ed 2000) 109–10, 297, 299, 402, 410, 417.

710 See Cicero *Paradoxa Stoicorum* (*Paradoxes of the Stoics*) 6.49.

711 'That lively and active charity has grown too chill' (*refrixit illa vivida et operosa charitas*); Erasmus echoes Matt 24:12; see 313 above.

The person on whose shoulders the whole house leans and rests goes hunting or wages war; someone hired by him consecrates and ordains. He consecrates walls, vessels, robes, stones, and bells. A parish priest intones and administers the sacraments. A preacher is hired separately to speak on certain days and hours to the people of a single little town, though at one time a single man sufficed for all these ministries, in none of which was he more vigilant and busy than in teaching the people. Alas for our pleasures and the customs of these times![712] So too will you scarcely find anyone who would make a tolerable preacher, though this is such a great part of the priestly office. Hence it was our first wish that the Lord put in charge of his flock shepherds like himself, that is, truly good shepherds, who would not be reluctant to give even their life for their sheep,[713] who themselves know how and are willing to fulfil the delegated office and are anxious to enrol others who are able and willing to take on some part of the duties. If the best course is not available, one must, as they say, resort to second best.[714] And yet hardly anyone could fulfil this properly unless he is wise so that he knows how to choose, and devout so that he holds nothing more important than the welfare of his flock, and upright so that he desires what is right, and brave so that neither partialities nor enmities nor fear nor hope of human possessions can deflect him from the rectitude of his judgment.

We hear daily complaints from those who deplore that the Christian religion has collapsed and that the authority that once embraced the entire world has been reduced to these straits.[715] It is fitting therefore that those who grieve sincerely over this should ask Christ with ardent and constant prayers to deign to send out workers for his harvest[716] or, to put it better, to send sowers to his field. Immortal God, how much land lies open in the world where the seed of the gospel either has not yet been

* * * * *

712 Erasmus' words here (*Vae deliciis nostris et horum temporum moribus*) echo Cicero's laments in *In Catilinam* 1.2 (*O tempora, o mores!*) and *In Verrem* II 4 56 (line 11); *O tempora, o mores! nihil nimium vetus proferam*).

713 Cf John 10:11.

714 Erasmus might be recalling *Adagia* III iv 71 *Altera navigatio* 'The next best way to sail.'

715 These complaints, generally expressed, were not groundless: in addition to the turmoil of the Reformation and the Peasants War, wars continued between the Valois king of France and the Holy Roman Emperor, Turkish power menaced the eastern Mediterranean, especially after the loss of Constantinople (1453), Rome was sacked in 1527, etc.

716 Matt 9:38; Luke 10:2

cast[717] or else was cast in such a way that there are more weeds than wheat.[718] Europe is a very small part of the world; the most flourishing part of all is Greece and Asia Minor, where the gospel first emigrated from Judaea with great success,[719] but is this not almost completely occupied by Mahomeddans and those who are hostile to the name of Christ? In all the length and breadth of Asia proper what part, I ask you, is ours, when Palestine itself, from which the light of the gospel first flowed forth, is in bondage to allophyles?[720] In Africa what is ours? Yet it must not be doubted that in such a vast area there are rude and simple peoples who could easily be attracted to Christ if men were sent out to make a good sowing, not to mention that regions hitherto unknown are being discovered every day;[721] it is said that there are others where none of our people has yet reached. I pass over now the boundless number of Jews commingled with us, I omit the many who are pagans cloaked under the name of Christ, I omit the great phalanxes of schismatics and heretics.[722] How much profit for Christ would there be in these if good and faithful workers were sent to cast good seed,[723] to tear up the weeds, to plant good seedlings, root out the bad, build the house of God, demolish the structures that do not rest on the rock of Christ,[724] and finally to harvest the mature crop but harvest it for Christ, not for

* * * * *

717 Erasmus seems to refer here to the recently discovered lands of the new world. For his awareness of these discoveries, see 359–62 below.

718 Cf Matt 13:24–6; see Ep 916: 236–50, especially 244–5.

719 See the Acts of the Apostles.

720 Those not belonging to the tribe or 'of another tribe' (ἀλλόφυλος): 'a gentile' (cf Acts 10:28 ἀλλοφύλῳ; cf Josephus *Antiquitates Judaicae* 4.8.2 ἀλλοφύλων), 'others,' 'foreigners,' 'heathen,' persons or groups with which one does not associate.

721 On preaching in the world's undiscovered regions, see Ep 1800, dedicated to John III, king of Portugal, *Chrysostomi lucubrationes* 'preface to some translations from Chrysostom,' especially 513: 'How I wish we had such fine speakers [such as Paul or Chrysostom] today in every part of the Christian world, for it is on these that the education of the people in large measure depends. If we understand nothing of the philosophy of the gospel, if we flag in doing the work of charity, if our faith is weak where it should be strongest, it is because the people rarely hear preachers of the gospel, and competent gospel preachers are rarer still.'

722 For the schismatics Erasmus refers to the Christian churches of the East that have been divided from the West since the Great Schism of 1054; for who exactly is a heretic, see book 4 CWE 68 1048.

723 Erasmus refers here to the parables of the sower and the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt 13:3–40).

724 1 Cor 10:4

themselves, and to collect souls for the Lord, not wealth for themselves?[725] Recently the king of Ethiopia, commonly called Prester John,[726] submitted himself to the Roman See through an ambassador, remonstrating somewhat with the pope because that race, though not alien to the Christian faith, was so long neglected by the pastor of the whole world.[727] Some good men zealous for the propagation of the faith complain that the Lapps,[728] a remarkably simple and uncultivated people of northern Scythia, are ruled by some Christian princes or other but are being oppressed by a harsh human yoke without having the sweet yoke of Christ[729] put upon them; they are being stripped of their secular possessions without being enriched by evangelical wealth. It would be most beautiful and most pleasing to God to give to, rather than take from, those whom we strive to win for Christ, and to receive them into our authority in such a way that they rejoice in being subject to princes under whose power they may live more comfortably than they lived before. Do we know

* * * * *

725 Cf 1 Cor 9:19–22.

726 Prester John (Pretre Jan): Otto of Freising's (c 1111–58) *Chronica de duabus civitatibus* mentions a Nestorian Christian king and priest living far off in Asia who supposedly advanced Christianity against the Muslims. After the twelfth century this legend was conflated with other reports of Prester John, which located him in Ethiopia. Erasmus' comment on Prester John refers to the king of Ethiopia, David IV (called Prester John), and the embassy he sent to Pope Clement VII in January 1533, who was then in Bologna. See C.E. Nowell 'The Historical Prester John' *Speculum* 28 (1953) 435–55. Viglius Zuichemus (Wigle Zuichem) wrote to Erasmus on 23 February 1533 from Padua about the event; see Allen Ep 2767:159–60: 'Interfui etiam cum ab Aethiopiae Rege, quem Pretioanem vocant, legatio in publico cardinalium consessu praesidente Pontifice audita est. Ea novam significabat illius religionem ac devotionem erga Sedem Apostolicam. A qua sese in obedientiam in filium ac Regem recipi petebat, multaque alia quae non lubet commemorare.'

727 Chomarat correctly notes that this information is not in Viglius Zuichemus' letter to Erasmus; it is probable he heard this from Damião de Gois (1501–74), who visited him in March of 1533, bringing with him his report, *Legatio presbyteri Ioannis*. See ASD V-4 149 325–6n. For Damião de Gois' account, see Allen Ep 2826:31.

728 'Lapps' (*Pilapios*); according to Chomarat this information also came to Erasmus from Damião de Gois in the letter written from Antwerp on 20 June 1533; Ep 2826:33–49. 'Scythia' is the word commonly used for the land in the extreme north of Europe; see eg Pliny *Naturalis historia* 2.50.51. 'Scythia' was historically a defined region with a distinctive people, but it vanished after the second century AD. See OCD 968.

729 Cf Matt 11:29.

how to tame wild and frightful beasts, either for entertainment or for ordinary use, and not know how to pacify men so that they serve Christ? Do monarchs pay people to teach elephants to dance, to tame lions for sport, to tame lynxes and leopards for hunting: and the monarch of the church[730] cannot find how to entice men to the lovable service of Christ? I know that hardly a beast is found more difficult to tame than a stubborn Jew and an obdurate heretic, though no animal is so vicious that it may not be tamed by kindness and gentleness, but I am speaking now of the heathen who wander like sheep without a shepherd because none is sent them to teach the Christian philosophy; and not only is none being sent, but, if travellers to those regions are telling the truth, those very Christian princes who have taken control of these peoples prevent any evangelical teacher from approaching out of fear that they will throw off the heavy yoke by which they are oppressed if they know a little more, for those satraps would rather rule over asses than people. Moreover, what am I to say of those who sail past unknown shores in a fleet and sack and plunder cities that anticipate no hostility? Under what title are crimes of this kind celebrated? They are called victories; and yet not even among the pagans did such victories earn praise when people on whom war has not been declared are subject to surprise attacks.[731] They say, 'But they favoured the Turk'; this is the only reason offered for the destruction of the towns. I am not sure whether they themselves would accept this excuse if the Turk happened to sack a city and said, 'It favoured the Christians.' There is the greatest difference between banditry and a Christian war, between someone who propagates the kingdom of the faith and someone who advances the tyranny of this world, between someone who seeks the salvation of souls and someone who hunts the booty of Mammon.[732] Gold is being brought from the regions discovered, and jewels, but it would be more deserving of a triumph to import there the wisdom of Christ, which is more precious than gold, and the pearl of the gospel,[733] which is well bought at the cost of all one's wealth. Among us there is too

* * * * *

730 Erasmus refers to the pope whom he criticizes here, as well as above, for not 'sending workers for his harvest' (357). Princes, too, who rule those parts of the world are also especially to blame because of their oppressive practices and prohibitions against missionaries from entering those regions.

731 Erasmus expands his criticism of monarchs and rulers to include explorers and their methods of conquest and domination.

732 Luke 16:9, 13; Matt 6:24

733 Cf Matt 13:45–6.

much of what corrupts our minds. The Lord orders his people to ask the lord of the harvest to send out workers because the harvest was large, the workers few;[734] now too there is no less need to ask God to dispatch workers to such widespread fields.

But all give different excuses. And yet the Christian realm has so many myriads of Franciscans,[735] among whom are probably many that truly burn with a seraphic fire;[736] and no fewer are the myriads of Dominicans, and it is likely that there are many of a cherubic spirit among these.[737] From these

* * * * *

734 Matt 9:37–8

735 Chomarat (ASD V-4 151 366n) notes there were probably about thirty thousand Franciscans around the year 1500; in 1517 by papal decision the Franciscan order separated into Observants and Conventuals. In 1525 the newly reformed Capuchins separated from the Observants.

736 Isa 6:1–13 gives the account of a seraph touching the lips of Isaiah with a burning coal to prepare him to proclaim God's word. Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite places the seraphim in the highest rank of angels. Thomas of Celano's *The Life of Saint Francis* relates Francis' vision of 'a man, having six wings like a Seraph,' and gives the mystical meaning of the seraph's wings; see *Francis of Assisi* I 263–5 and 282–3. According to the *Legenda maior* of the Franciscan scholastic theologian St Bonaventure, Francis' 'vision of the Seraph winged after the likeness of the Crucified' accompanied his reception of the stigmata of Christ's wounds; Bonaventure 'The Major Legend of Saint Francis' in *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents* ed Regis J. Armstrong et al, 3 vols (Hyde Park, NY 1999–2001) II 630–9, chapter 13: 'The Sacred Stigmata.' Bonaventure himself came to be called the 'seraphic doctor' after his *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, which speaks of the seraphim's six wings 'as six suspensions of illumination'; Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* trans Philotheus Boehner OFM, ed Stephen F. Brown (Indianapolis and Cambridge 1993) 3–4 (prologue 3), 5–7 (I 1–7), 37 (VII 1). Erasmus often criticizes Franciscans who 'defame' Francis 'by those who make a great parade of his name'; see eg *Ciceronianus* CWE 28 386. For Francis' stigmata, see now Augustine Thompson *Francis of Assisi: A New Biography* (Ithaca 2012) 116–19, 265–6.

737 Erasmus is playing on the phrase that suggests one given to mirth and fun – loving indulgence. The cherubim were not associated with the Dominican order as the seraphim were with the Franciscans, but Erasmus wittily makes the association; see also Allen Ep 2700:54–5: 'although he was neither a Seraphic nor a Cherubic (for they delight in being called by these names) . . .' Chomarat estimates that around 1500 the number of Franciscans and Dominicans was each roughly thirty thousand (ASD V-4 151 366n), a number much lower than the 'total membership of the Order in 1303 of about 20,650': see William A. Hinnebusch, O.P. *The History of the Dominican Order: Origins and Growth to 1500* (New York c 1966) I 331 and ODCC 'Dominican Order' 497–8. In 1517 the Franciscan order became divided, separating themselves into the Conventuals and

troops let men be chosen who are truly dead to the world, alive to Christ, to teach the word of God sincerely among the barbarian races. Ignorance of the language is given as an excuse; yet for human embassies princes find men to learn different languages, and the Athenian Themistocles learned Persian well enough in a single year to be able to speak with the king without an interpreter.[738] Will we not strive to achieve the same in an enterprise so exalted? Among barbarous and unknown nations the apostles found food and clothing,[739] and God has promised that those who seek the kingdom of God will lack nothing;[740] but if they meet with a people so thankless that they totally refuse bread, water, and shelter, there remains the outstandingly beautiful example of that best of preachers Paul, who sewed hides together with his own hands in order not to burden anyone.[741] He sewed together the skins of goats, I say, with those very hands with which he gave the Holy Spirit to believers,[742] with which he consecrated the body and blood of the Lord.[743] Not even miracles will be lacking should the situation require them, so long as sincere faith is present together with a seraphic charity; or at least the place of miracles will be taken by a mind free from every desire for the human, a constantly sober life, a zeal for helping everyone without recompense,[744] a patience firm against all injuries,[745] a constant cheerfulness of spirit in afflictions,[746] and an affable modesty with no trace of haughtiness. Nor did the apostles produce miracles indiscriminately, but they attracted far more to Christ's realm with the things that I have mentioned than with miracles, for many attributed the latter to magic while the former demonstrated that the Spirit of God was working through men.[747]

* * * * *

the Observants, with the former declared 'the true Order of St Francis'; see John Moorman *A History of the Franciscan Order: From Its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford 1968) 569–85; ODCC 'Franciscan Order' 634–6. For the mention of cherubim in the Bible, see Gen 3:24; Exod 25:18–20, 37:7–9; Num 7:89; 1 Kings 6:23–35; Ps 18:10 (Vulg 17:11); Ezekiel 10.

738 See Plutarch *Themistocles* 29.3–4.

739 Rom 15:26–7; 1 Cor 16:1–4; 2 Cor 8–9

740 Matt 6:33

741 Acts 18:3

742 Acts 8:17

743 There is no explicit reference to this in Scripture. Erasmus might be alluding to 1 Cor 11:17–33.

744 See 2 Cor 11:7.

745 Gal 5:22; Rom 5:4

746 1 Thess 3:4, 7; 2 Cor 1:4, 8

747 Cf Acts 8:6–15.

There remains the final excuse, mortal danger. But, since all must die once,[748] what more attractive or what happier death could befall than for the sake of the gospel? Those who travel to Jerusalem from the farthest regions of the earth expose themselves to mortal danger, and all do not return home safe from that pilgrimage; yet every year such a multitude of men runs to Jerusalem to see some place or other, and is mortal peril offered as excuse here? What, I ask, is the importance of seeing the ruins of Jerusalem? But building a spiritual Jerusalem in men's minds is truly important. How many soldiers fearlessly commit themselves to battle, holding their life cheap for the sake of a mortal prince? And does that highest monarch, who promises in return for military service a crown of eternal glory,[749] not find soldiers endowed with a similar courage? How much more desirable to die as Paul died than to wither away from consumption,[750] to be tormented for many years by gout, to be twisted by paralysis, to die again and again from the stone.[751] Moreover, supposing death should come, it will not come before the day that the Father has appointed for his own. The apostles lived in a world of noisy confusion and reached a full old age; therefore there is no reason to fear death under the protection of Christ, who will not allow a hair to fall to the earth unless by his Father's will.[752] Finally, how is it proper that those who profess the apostolic life are deterred from the apostolic office by a love for life? To give up one's life for the gospel is perhaps truly apostolic.

* * * * *

748 Heb 9:27

749 See 1 Pet 5:4; 1 Thess 2:19; Isa 62:3.

750 Chomarat (ASD V-4 153 401n, 402) suggests that Erasmus has in mind the account of Paul's death from St Jerome; see Jerome *De viris inlustribus* PL 23 (1845) 603–726; *On Illustrious Men* trans Thomas P. Halton FOC 100 13. According to legend and Jerome, Paul was decapitated at Rome in the age of Nero (AD 67) on the same day that Peter was crucified, thirty-seven years after the death of Jesus; hence the celebration of Saints Peter and Paul (29 June). However, as Chomarat also suggests, it might be more likely that Erasmus is mindful of his own failing condition and painful infirmities; see eg his letter of 19 July 1530 to Johann Rinck, Allen Ep 2355:40–66. Note too Erasmus' words, 364 below: 'That to which we urge you is difficult, but it is also the most beautiful and excellent enterprise of all; would that the Lord had given me such a spirit that I could earn death in so pious an activity rather than be consumed by slow death in these torments.'

751 Erasmus often complains of the illness of the stone; see eg Ep 1558:65–75, especially 66.

752 See Luke 21:18; Acts 27:34; 2 Sam 14:11.

For Crates of Thebes and Socrates of Athens and Diogenes of Sinope,[753] along with many others, have scorned wealth though they knew neither Christ nor the apostles. Come on then,[754] you men of bravery, you glorious leaders of Christian soldiery, put on the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of devotion,[755] take up 'the shield of faith'[756] and 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,'[757] and 'girding your loins'[758] with the belt of modesty and with your feet shod, which represent the emotions, ready with the whole spiritual panoply to preach the gospel of peace,[759] gird yourselves up with fearless courage for the glorious enterprise; cast down, kill, slaughter – not men, but ignorance, impiety, and every vice, for to kill in this way is to save. Ensure not that you return home from them richer, but that you enrich them with a spiritual wealth; count it a rich booty if you snatch so many souls from the tyranny of Satan and claim them for the Redeemer, if you lead hordes of captives in triumph into heaven for him. That to which we urge you is difficult, but it is also the most beautiful and excellent enterprise of all; would that the Lord had given me such a spirit that I could earn death in so pious an activity rather than be consumed by a slow death in my present torments.[760]

But even though one does not go to barbarian nations, no one is suitable for the office of preacher who has not rendered his mind superior to

* * * * *

753 On Crates of Thebes (c 365–285 BC), see Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* 6.5.4, where he writes that Crates divided up his fortune of two hundred talents among his fellow citizens; see Erasmus *Apophthegmata* CWE 38 831–2; OCD 296. On Socrates of Athens (469–399 BC), see Erasmus *Apophthegmata* CWE 37 221–51; Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* 2.5.9; OCD 997–8. On Diogenes of Sinope (c 400–c 325 BC), see Erasmus *Apophthegmata* CWE 37 271–334; Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* 6.2 passim; OCD 348.

754 Eph 6:14–17. Erasmus ends this part of book 1 by encouraging preachers to forego all earthly considerations and carry out the duty of proclaiming God's word. See St Paul's use of exhortation in Eph 6:14–20. Erasmus also echoes Tertullian *Ad martyras* 3; CCSL 1 1–8 ANF III 694; see also 365–7 below.

755 Eph 6:14; 1 Thess 5:8

756 Eph 6:16

757 Eph 6:17

758 Eph 6:14

759 Like Paul, Erasmus uses the metaphor of war for the spiritual combat of the individual Christian and of the preacher who in proclaiming 'the gospel of peace' battles against 'ignorance, impiety, and every vice.' See *Enchiridion* CWE 66 1–127; cf Prudentius' *Psychomachia*.

760 For Erasmus' description of the physical torments he suffered at the time he finished *Ecclesiastes*, see Schoeck (2) 340–2.

wealth, pleasures, and even life and death; the cross[761] is nowhere absent for those who preach the word of the Lord sincerely. There are certain powerful men today, not unlike Herod,[762] who mock Christ and his teaching; there are men like Annas and Caiaphas,[763] there are scribes and pharisees who would sooner confound heaven and earth[764] than suffer any loss to their authority and income; there are artisans not unlike those who among the Ephesians stirred up a mob against the apostles because their preaching reduced their own income;[765] and there is no lack of Judases[766] who, though they seem intimate with Christ, sell him and betray him to those who want him dead; and among the people some turn thumbs down[767] and shout, 'Crucify him, crucify him.'[768] Those who have experienced this freedom and the companion of freedom, the cross, will admit the truth of what I am saying.

The office of preacher, then, is very difficult but also very beautiful; the contest is no ordinary one, but the prizes are outstanding. In the games of princes men are found who willingly go through smoke and fire after a cap hung at the top of a pole, men who go forth to a dangerous single combat for a bull as the prize;[769] and does Christ – a master of the games[770] who promises everlasting triumph in heaven to those who compete faithfully – not find noble competitors? And yet a mortal master of the games does not always award whatever more or less worthless prize he is proposing to the person who has earned it but quite often transfers it to someone he favours more; and even if the judgment is free of all corruption, the person who

* * * * *

761 See Matt 10:38, 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23, 14:27.
762 See Luke 23:6–12.
763 Matt 26:57; John 18:13–14, 19–24, 28
764 'Confound heaven and earth' (or, to mingle sea and sky); *Adagia* I iii 81 *Miscebis sacra profanis* 'You will mix sacred and profane.'
765 Acts 19:23–40
766 See John 13:21–30, 18:1–5; Matt 26:14–25; Luke 22:3–5.
767 For 'thumb down' (*verso police*), see Juvenal 3:36; cf *Adagia* I viii 46 *Premere pollicem. Convertere pollicem* 'Thumbs down. Thumbs up.'
768 See John 19:6; Luke 23:21; Mark 15:13–14; Matt 27:22–3.
769 For bull sports at Rome in the Renaissance, see Charles L. Stinger *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington 1998) 57.
770 For 'master of the games' (*agonothetes*), see eg Tertullian *Ad martyras* 3 CCSL 1 5; ANF III 694: 'In like manner, O blessed ones, count whatever is hard in this lot of yours as a discipline of your powers of mind and body. You are about to pass through a noble struggle, in which the living God acts the part of superintendent (*agonothetes*), in which the Holy Ghost is your trainer, in which the prize is an eternal crown of angelic essence, citizenship in the heavens, glory everlasting.' Cf *De concordia* CWE 65 183 and n261.

proposes the prizes and invites to the contest does not give strength to the competitor. But our master of the games, who challenges you to win, also gives you the strength to win, and a defeated contestant does not take away disgrace instead of a prize; but each gets his full reward, if indeed in the gospel it is not only the one who had doubled five talents given as principal that is told, 'Well done, good and faithful servant,' but also the one who had doubled two: even the man who had received one would have been told the same had he not buried it in the ground despite knowing that he had a master who was quite eager for this sort of gain.[771]

Where then are those who profess apostolic perfection? Why do they not show apostolic courage? Why does none arise from among so many to claim Paul's glory,[772] to teach the gospel without charge and at his own expense?[773] If prizes inspire us towards strength,[774] all those that the world promises are nothing to these that Christ pledges. Whoever truly believes that such a reward awaits, whoever sighs for that unfading crown of heavenly glory[775] will readily make light of an effort that is neither lasting (for whatever is done here is ephemeral)[776] nor without effective relief. Wicked men plot an attack, but the good defend; the impious curse, but the devout pray for a blessing; evil men revile, but good men praise, and only the praise that the good offer to virtue is true praise; those whose minds the world has seized scorn, but those who cherish the glory of the Lord Jesus respect and revere. And yet meanwhile it is useless here to boast except in the Lord.[777] In place of the secular pleasures he has foregone, the preacher ought to be content with either a mind sure of its reward that is like an unending banquet[778] or the internal joy of the spirit that accompanies evangelical deeds.[779] These things the eye of man has not seen, nor has the ear heard them, nor have they ascended into the heart of man;[780] but

* * * * *

771 See the parable of the talents in Matt 25:14–30 and Luke 19:12–27.
772 See eg 2 Cor 3.
773 2 Cor 11:7; 1 Cor 4:12
774 *si praemiis accendimur ad virtutem*; prizes and punishments are two crucial components of the preacher's message; see especially book 4. 'Vices and virtues, punishment and rewards' are also central to Franciscan preaching and Christian preaching in general.
775 1 Cor 9:25; 1 Thess 2:19; 1 Pet 5:4
776 2 Cor 4:16–18
777 See 2 Corinthians 12 and Gal 6:14.
778 See Prov 15:15 'a cheerful heart has a continual feast.'
779 Cf Rom 14:17.
780 Isa 64:4 (cited by Paul 1 Cor 2:9)

they are perceived with a hidden sense of the mind[781] by those who have deserved to taste the sweetness of the Lord.[782] Someone who is only a man cannot grasp even with the fancy of thought how great this joy is; you must be greater than a man to look within, hear within, perceive within with the heart.[783] What joy, what exultation, what celebration must be in the heart of the faithful preacher when he considers how many souls the Lord has rescued from Satan's tyranny and claimed for himself by his ministry? How great is Paul's satisfaction, how great his triumph, whenever he recalls how widely he has spread the gospel, especially in places where it had not been sown.[784]

But I do not think that Christians are especially lacking here in strength of spirit and judgment, inasmuch as we see that in other matters many bravely scorn wealth and pleasures and other evils of a different sort to the point of scorning life. How many set out for Jerusalem through so many dangers, leaving at home their sweet children and dearest wife? How many – not only men but women as well – neglect homeland, parents, kin, comrades, property, together with all the pleasures of life, and hide themselves in a sort of everlasting imprisonment, professing the austere practice of the Brigittines or Carthusians,[785] whether to win remission of their sins or to lay up a greater treasure of glory for themselves in heaven?[786] There is one type of monk that wears an iron breastplate against the bare skin instead of a hair shirt, one that walks with shins and feet bare, one that takes the cold ground for his bed, one that drinks water instead of wine, eats dry bread instead of culinary delicacies; and there are even some who willingly tear their body with scourges and others who, covered only with a robe of hemp, walk about bareheaded, barefooted, sleep on no mattress, do not

* * * * *

781 Cf 2 Cor 12:4.

782 Ps 34:8 (Vulg 33:9)

783 Cf Augustine *De Trinitate* 13.2.5 CCSL 50A 386 10–11; NPNF 1st series 3 168: *nec foris est a nobis sed in intimis nobis* 'Nor is it without apart from us, but deeply seated within us.'

784 See Rom 15:18–20; 2 Cor 10:15–17.

785 'Brigittines' or Order of Our Saviour (or Bridgettine Order [*Ordo sanctissimi salvatoris*] was a congregation of cloistered religious women and men (double monastery) founded in 1346 by St Bridget of Sweden (1303–73) and noted for austerity; see ODCC 237–8. The Carthusians were a group of religious contemplatives founded by St Bruno in 1084 at the Grande Chartreuse. The Rule, the *Consuetudines Cartusiae*, received papal approval in 1122; additions were later made to it. See ODCC 293–4.

786 Matt 19:21; Mark 10:21; Luke 12:33, 18:22

cover themselves at night with cloaks but sleep upon the ground in the same garb in which they walk by day, taste neither wine nor ale, touch no kind of food but bread, raw vegetables, and fruit (a baked apple is an Easter treat for them), nor do they touch money or have anywhere a home or monastery or stewards from whom to ask anything. They fast on all the days on which the church has imposed it, and fast not as we fast at Lent but in such a way that for the whole day on which the fast has been imposed they touch neither food nor drink until lunch of the following day; and they never relax the austerity of their life at all, even when they travel in the coldest regions. Since so many do not refuse to adopt such harsh practices as these of their own free will in order to win Christ's favour for themselves, why do so few aim at the office of preacher, which is the most pleasing to Christ and the most effective for wiping out sins or winning a glorious crown? For it was not to drinkers of water or wearers of hemp or to the unkempt or to the goatish that the Lord promised a seat upon the twelve chairs,[787] but to the apostles and those who exercise the role of apostles; and to those who have received such a prophet in the name of the prophet he promises the reward of a prophet.[788] If alms extinguish sin,[789] no alms are more pleasing to God than acting as a good shepherd; if enduring hardships earns an increase of glory, no hardships are more pleasing to God than those that are borne for the sake of the gospel,[790] and there will be enough of these even if you do not bring them upon yourself. Why is it, I ask, that so many are found strong in these things that men prescribe for themselves, and there are so few to take on the rule of the perfect man,[791] where God challenges us with the highest prizes, especially when the world is everywhere full of people selling themselves under the label of the apostolic life and evangelical perfection? If they are truly dead to the world, let them show in this most beautiful enterprise that they truly are dead to the world.

In the cities there is no lack of people to preach the word of the Lord; it is most beautiful to sow the seed where no one sows, in solitary villages, in barbarous regions, where there is a full crop but no farmer. Not even here will there be a lack of people to offer, if not luxuries, at least vital necessities to those who live purely and teach sincerely. The sober are naturally content with little; what farmer, however slight his means, would be burdened by

* * * * *

787 Cf Matt 19:28.
788 Matt 10:41
789 See Luke 11:41 and Dan 4:24.
790 Mark 8:35
791 Eph 4:13

a guest who is content with pure water, coarse bread, and beets or turnips in place of meat? If a rich man invites of his own volition, let them go, by all means, but let them present a model of sobriety among the delights that are offered. If a poor man invites, let them go there too with equal eagerness. If no one invites, let them impose themselves nowhere but seek another town[792] without eating; the Lord will not allow his servants to die of hunger.[793] Finally, if going hungry is their excuse for not preaching because they may not carry around money in their belt [*zona*] to buy food, they can take along bread and cheese in a little sack [*sacculus*]; this is not an indignity but the pride of heralds, very pleasing to God.[794] So much for those who are said not to carry money about with them.

As for those who have belts, it is fitting that they should not only refrain from burdening the poor or thrifty but should share their own with the poor,[795] for it is the mark of the true shepherd to feed in three ways: with sacred teaching, with a saintly life, and with corporeal assistance. I know that it is not a great matter if those who sow their own spirituality reap the carnal harvest of others – I know that a worker is worthy of his reward[796] if it does not come from elsewhere; but though we read that this reward was given generously by willing donors,[797] we also read that it was never demanded by Christ nor by any of the apostles, nor did the Lord give them any such command. To Zacchaeus he said, 'I want to stay with you today.'[798] Zacchaeus had not invited the Lord aloud, but the Lord heard his heart and loved the modesty that kept him from daring to request what he most ardently desired; so in this instance the Lord did not impose himself upon his hospitality but relieved the bashfulness of one whose love was great. Judas received what was given willingly

* * * * *

792 Luke 4:43
793 Matt 6:25–6, 31–3; Luke 12:22–4, 29–30
794 See St Francis 'The Later Rule,' chapter IV in *Francis of Assisi* II 102: 'I strictly command all my brothers not to receive coins or money in any form, either personally or through intermediaries.' For the biblical basis of this command, see especially Luke 9:2–3 ('. . . and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal. And he said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag [*pera*], nor bread, nor money . . ." ') and Matt 10:9–10 ('Take no gold, nor silver, nor copper in your belts [*zonis*], no bag [*pera*] for your journey . . .'). Erasmus is presumably recalling Matthew's words, not Luke's.
795 Erasmus means bishops and clergy, as well as members of religious orders with financial resources.
796 Luke 10:7; 1 Tim 5:18
797 Cf Matt 20:1–16 (the parable of the eleventh hour).
798 Luke 19:5; see 1–10.

by friends, but from it gifts were made to the poor.[799] But today, they say, human generosity has cooled, and no wonder since sincerity has decreased and luxury increased among evangelists;[800] let them go back to their original simplicity, and the people will readily return to their original generosity. Let preachers therefore recognize the dignity of their function and strive with Paul to exalt their ministry,[801] not in order to create glory for themselves among men[802] but so that Christ may grow rich from the profit of souls[803] and God may be glorified in the saintly character of his servants.

But the Lord must be entreated to send such workers into the vineyard,[804] which is now almost destroyed. These responsibilities belong to everyone, but the salvation or damnation of the people at large depends most upon their princes and bishops.[805] The integrity of princes will ensure a minimum of warfare and brigandage, and will not allow powerful men to be permitted whatever they like; it will provide uncorrupted magistrates and judges. Bishops will provide clerics of a settled life, will provide preachers endowed with the evangelical virtues, will provide learned and godly men capable of moulding the young[806] and dropping the seeds of Christian devotion upon their tender minds.[807] The reflowering of evangelical vigour in the people rests particularly with these persons. One must pray

* * * * *

799 Cf John 13:28–30, 12:4–6.

800 Erasmus means those entrusted with the mission to preach the gospel. See *Moria* CWE 27 137–40.

801 Rom 11:13

802 1 Cor 9:16

803 1 Cor 9:19–22

804 Matt 20:1–7

805 Erasmus returns to this theme of princes and bishops bearing responsibility for ensuring peaceful and just conditions in which the gospel can be preached. Beside insuring freedom from turmoil, bishops and priests must promote education for training good preachers. Erasmus recommends in broad strokes what would become the Catholic diocesan seminary (*seminarium*) after Trent. See 151–8 and 326 above.

806 For 'men capable of moulding' (*formatores*), see Quintilian 10.2.20.

807 *semina christianae pietatis*; the word 'seminary' derives from this idea that the schools for young men who would become preachers would be 'seedbeds of virtue'; see the parallel idea in Quintilian 10.2.20, where he states that 'it is his [the 'director of the minds of others'] to foster whatever good qualities he may perceive in his pupils, to make good their deficiencies as far as may be, to correct their faults and turn them to better things.' See also Cicero *De finibus* 4.8.18, 5.7.18, 5.15.43, 5.21.59–60.

for them above all that God may impart to them the principal spirit[808] so that each may glorify his ministry. However, just as God uses their ministry to save the people, so he sometimes gives good or bad princes according to the deserts or even the prayers of the people.[809] Paul himself, so outstanding an apostle, frequently asks that he be helped by the prayers of his disciples when before God, saying, 'Brothers, pray for us, that the word of God may have free course and that we may be delivered from perverse and wicked men.'[810] Since a witless people does not know what should be requested or how, the Apostle prescribes what he wishes to be sought from God through them, namely the greatest thing of all, that the gospel have free course, that is, that Christian devotion spread quickly and widely. With loud shouts we ask God for a successful harvest of grain, but we should ask with louder ones that the evangelical crop produce an abundant harvest. The common people wish longevity, victories, and triumphs for their prince, things that God would give even unasked if this best suited the state. It is more correct to ask from God on behalf of monarchs those things that Solomon, that wisest of kings, asked for himself,[811] and for this prudent request he was praised by the Lord; and what he sought by name he received in abundance, while wealth and glory and other advantages, which he had not sought, were given in addition. 'A wise prince is the salvation of his people,'[812] says Scripture. In fact, in every kind of affair what is paramount should come first in our prayers. Let someone who is commending a secular state to God in his prayers seek for his prince the wisdom that sits by the heavenly throne, judgment, an upright mind, fear of God, love for the state, and the other virtues that render a prince truly great and beneficial to his people. But we must pray much more fervently that the Lord give to the shepherds of his flock a heart pure of all earthly desires, a mind thirsting for the profit and honour of the Lord Jesus, a spirit fearless against all terrors, a learned tongue,[813] a heart packed with the treasure of heavenly learning[814] – in short, that they be all equipped on every side with

* * * * *

808 Ps 51:12 (Vulg 50:14). See 263–4, 267, 290 above for Erasmus' discussion of 'principal spirit.'
809 2 Chron 18:21–2; Mic 6:16
810 2 Thess 3:1–2
811 Wisd of Sol 7–9
812 See Wisd of Sol 6:26 (Vulg *multitudo autem sapientium sanitas est orbis terrarum et rex sapiens populi stabilimentum est*). Erasmus' quotation does not follow the Vulgate exactly.
813 Isa 50:4
814 Cf Col 2:3.

the mystical adornment of Aaron,[815] and that other prophets under them be found faithful.

Prophets I call those that announce the will of God to the people from the oracles of Scripture,[816] so that they can legitimately use that preamble of the prophets, 'The Lord says this';[817] for false prophets[818] also used to shout, 'The Lord says this' even more insistently than the true ones, and they have always been greater in number. Whoever interprets the meaning of Scripture in good faith can rightly begin, 'The Lord says this.' These are the main hinges upon which hangs the condition of the Christian commonwealth. Accordingly, it would be right for them to have first place in prayers, first concern in appointments. It would scarcely be possible to express in words how much influence a prince brings upon either correcting or corrupting the public character, but the primates of the church are much more influential, since they are the teachers even of princes, at least in what pertains to religion and devotion. But sometimes it happens that enduring a harsh and wicked prince is good for the people,[819] so that the savagery of one may restrain the many and drive them to penitence through their affliction in external things; but a wicked shepherd can only bring the greatest misery to the multitude, and yet he too is sometimes given because of the people's stubborn rebelliousness. Hence the Lord's frequent indignation, hence the angry threats against bad prophets who adduce prophecy from their own heart, saying, 'The Lord says this' though the Lord has not spoken to them.[820] Those who twist Scripture to human desires are lying, however much they shout, 'The Lord says this,' because they do indeed have the label of Scripture but put forward a spurious sense. Such men are the more dangerous because they conceal human desires under divine authority and import the destruction of devotion under an image of devotion. Accordingly, the Lord in the gospel does not order them to be avoided, does not order them to be killed, but warns us to beware of them.[821] They are intermingled,

* * * * *

815 See 301–20 above where Erasmus explains the spiritual significance of Aaron's vestments.

816 Cf 1 Cor 14:1. Erasmus' definition of a prophet fits his definition of the preacher; see 322 above.

817 'The Lord says this' is the customary exordium of the prophets when they delivered God's word to his people. See eg the repetitions of this phrase in Amos 1–2: 'Thus says the Lord' (*Haec dicit Dominus*); see also Ezek 13:7.

818 Cf Matt 24:11, 24; 1 John 4:1.

819 Cf Mic 6:16.

820 Ezek 13:7

821 See Matt 16:6, 11–12; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1. Erasmus' description of the false

like darnel with wheat,[822] in such a way that it is not expedient that they be torn up outright; a warning is enough to prevent them from deceiving anyone. For occasionally they even prove profitable, when they strengthen the chosen in their faith,[823] when they sharpen the devout to the knowledge of Scripture; were there no fire, gold would not shine.[824] The furnace tests the potter's vessels, and the trials of affliction test just men.[825] While great care must be taken in appointment to public and private functions, so the greatest care is necessary in selecting those to teach the people.

As has been said, all human emotions, which blind the judgment of the mind, must be banished far from these elections, for through them it happens that there is either no judgment or an absurd one (for what must never be forgotten needs to be driven home often). Is it not ridiculous to examine the reliability and skill of someone to whom you have decided to entrust your cattle or horses and give no consideration at all to those to whom you entrust the souls of men, for which Christ died?[826] Do you remove a farmer who cultivates your fields carelessly or ignorantly and not a pastor who casts bad seed into the Lord's good crop? Is it not ridiculous when sailing to entrust the oars to just anyone, to assign to the helm not just anyone but one who is experienced in piloting, while entrusting the care of the church to anyone at all indiscriminately? If someone were to say there, 'Let this man sit at the helm; he comes from a good family, is quite rich and has money to give and gives generously, has favour with the prince, is a close relative of yours and a friend,' would you not object at once, 'What does it matter to me what kind of person he is in other respects? This storm requires a trained and energetic pilot; otherwise everyone is in danger'? And does this occur to no one in a case where the danger is far more serious? In a shipwreck, cargo is at risk, bodies are at risk, though when a ship is smashed, many swim away unharmed, and the sea itself throws up much cargo onto the shore; in this shipwreck it is the souls, the cargo dearest to Christ, that face the greatest danger.

* * * * *

prophets fits that of heretics, and he makes clear that Christ did not order false prophets (heretics) to be killed, as happened to many condemned as 'heretics' in Erasmus' own day.

822 See the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt 13:24–30).

823 See 1 Cor 11:19; Acts 3:16.

824 *Adagia* IV i 58 *Aurum igni probatum* 'Gold tested in fire.'

825 See Ecclus 27:6 (Vulg *vasa figuli probat fornax . . .*); see eg Job passim.

826 Erasmus often uses this type of argument *a minore* in his writing; see eg *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 313–4; see especially *De copia* CWE 24 61–2, where he gives such examples of similes in arranging illustrative material.

This concern then pertains principally to monarchs, popes, bishops, and colleges of canons, or any others entrusted with the care of conferring ecclesiastical posts, since the right to choose a prelate has long since been removed from the people.[827] I do not condemn this removal (the present state of the times has required it), so long as those upon whom the power of selection has devolved consider sincerely, in making their choice, what is useful to the Lord's flock, for in some places the will of the prince alone creates bishops or abbots. But by whom they are created does not matter so much as the judgment and the sincerity with which they are created. Many kings think that they have obliged God with a great favour by funding some masses, by building a new monastery. I do not deny that what they are doing is a pious work if their mind is upright, but, in my opinion, they would bind God to themselves by no lesser merit if they were to apply both a Christian mind and Christian judgment in selecting the leaders of the church, and if they were to pay due honour and show obedience to these leaders when they perform their office correctly, so that the people too might heed them more readily.

Moreover, it is important that the person selecting and the person selected both understand the dignity, difficulty, and danger of the office. Let the person who has entrusted the priestly office to a worthy man congratulate himself and rejoice in his heart since he has accomplished successfully something difficult and splendid; let the person to whom the task has been assigned consider how magnificent, how sublime and excellent an office he has received, but at the same time how arduous and difficult. Let him weigh what ample rewards have been prepared for the person who, in carrying out his responsibilities, has demonstrated his fidelity and his service to the Lord, whose place he takes, and what a grave judgment, what a fearsome punishment awaits those who turn ecclesiastical power into tyranny, who neglect the Lord's profit and hunt their own gain.

Moreover, all that has been said here concerning bishops (for they are the true and first shepherds of the sheep) applies also to those who are now called *parochi* [parish priests], their name derived from the fact that they have undertaken the task of 'providing' spiritual nourishment to the

* * * * *

827 Erasmus refers to the practice in the early church of congregations choosing their bishops; notable is the case of Ambrose; see *Vita sancti Ambrosii* 41–5. The Second Lateran Council (1139) ended this practice. See I.S. Robinson 'The institutions of the church, 1073–1216' in *The New Cambridge Medieval History IV c 1024–c 1198* ed David Luscombe and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Cambridge 2004) 368–460, especially 455.

laity.[828] And they should not act less diligently because they have taken on the care of a flock that is small or rural or composed of women; it is a great thing to be a good shepherd, even of a tiny flock. Others perhaps are more bishops by virtue of titles, mitres, crooks, and the pallium, but they excel only if they present in reality what they profess in their external garb. I admit that in the eyes of men the dignity is not the same; in the eyes of God the dignity of someone who faithfully tends his flock, however small and humble, is greater than those who commend themselves to the eyes of men with jeweled crowns, golden crooks, a jeweled pallium, and other hoopla. Listen then, you pastor of a small and rustic village; listen, you prior or abbot governing a single small monastery; listen, you father entrusted with the care of a few cloistered maidens: recognize your dignity, not so that you swell up with pride, but so that you do not spoil the glory of your office by the admixture of something lower. What matters is not how numerous or splendid is the flock assigned to you but that you bring profit to the Lord, the moneylender, in proportion to the principal entrusted to you.[829] Consider not so much what has been entrusted as who has entrusted it; it is for him to evaluate what he has invested. Those who have managed a numerous flock well are going to get a greater prize, but no one who is going to gain eternal life should regret his reward. Listen, then, to the dignity of your office so that you do not underrate yourself, but listen also to its difficulty and danger, not so as to become dejected but to be more attentive and vigilant. It takes a fine kind of wisdom to be neither exalted by the dignity of an office nor dejected at its difficulty. If the honour excites you, reflect that you are only a steward;[830] if the difficulty frightens, reflect that the highest pastor, who does not fail his flock up to the end of time, still lives.[831] Paul, though in general unassuming, boasts that he can do all things through faith in him.[832] Finally, this too requires a great kind of heart, to turn a tiny flock into a great one, a humble one into a distinguished one, for that is to do honour to your ministry. No king deems himself humble even if a less widespread

* * * * *

828 A *parochus* is a parish priest who has the care of souls (*cura animarum*). Erasmus bases his explanation of the term upon the folk etymology of this word from the Greek παρέχω 'to provide, furnish, supply,' πάροχος 'a provider.' Cf Horace *Satires* 1.5.46 and 2.8.36; Cicero *Ad Atticum* 13.2.2.

829 Cf the parable of the talents in Matt 25:14–30; Luke 19:11–27.

830 For 'steward' (*dispensator*), cf Titus 1:7; 1 Cor 4:1–2; 1 Pet 4:10. See *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli ad Corinthios priorem* CWE 43 60–1, *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* (1 Cor 4.2) ASD VI-8 80, and *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli ad Titum* CWE 44 58–9.

831 Cf Matt 28:20; 2 Cor 13:4.

832 Phil 4:13

domain has fallen to his lot; he is great by the very fact of administering as king the Sparta that which has befallen him.[833]

Wonderful indeed is the splendour of royal distinction, which is called by a term that signifies something divine and greater than man: majesty.[834] To violate this in any way is punishable by death;[835] I do not at all diminish it. The Apostle orders that due honour be paid to kings for their eminence;[836] but, if we weigh the things themselves in a true scale, no king, in so far as he is a king, is so magnificent that he is not beneath the dignity, I shall say not of a bishop but of a village pastor in so far as he is a pastor.[837] If this seems paradoxical, the proof is at hand if you consider the content and aim of each office. What is the object of a king's concern? That the wicked be restrained by the laws, that the others be allowed to live their lives in peace, that is, that the property and persons of their citizens be safe. But how much loftier is the aim of the evangelical pastor, who ensures that there is peace in the minds of all by lulling and restraining the desires of this world. The king procures the establishment of peace with his neighbours; the priest provides that each has peace with God, and whoever has been reconciled to him has peace with himself[838] and plots no ill against another. The king provides that walls, houses, and fields along with their flocks are safe from bandits; you see the humble content of his royal duty. What of the preacher? That the property of the mind – faith, charity, sobriety, modesty, whose retention makes men happy, whose loss makes them miserable – is safe from the attack of Satan. What does royal liberality bestow? Stipends, salaries, honorary titles, all fleeting and prey to fortune's mockery. What of the preacher? Through the sacraments of the church he supplies heavenly grace; through baptism he makes heirs of the heavenly kingdom out of the sons of Gehenna;[839] through holy unction he gives strength of mind against the power of demons; through the Holy Eucharist he both joins men among

* * * * *

833 See *Adagia* II v 1 *Sparta nactus es, hanc orna* 'Sparta is your portion; do your best for her.'

834 *maiestas*; the word majesty is from the Latin meaning 'greater' (*maior, maius*).

835 The crime against majesty Erasmus refers to is *lèse-majesté* (*maiestas laesa*).

836 Rom 13:7; 1 Pet 2:13–14

837 Erasmus recalls the opening of this work where he sketches out the vast difference between sacred and secular assemblies; here he explains the infinitely higher and qualitatively different value of ecclesiastical duties and their benefits.

838 Cf Eph 2:16; Col 1:16; 2 Cor 5:19–20.

839 For 'sons of Gehenna' (*ex filiis gehennae*), see Matt 23:15 (singular 'son of Gehenna').

themselves and, binding them in harmony, joins them with God so that they now become one with him; through the sacrament of penitence he makes living men out of dead, free men out of slaves. Finally, from the storehouse of Scripture he daily sets out the morsels of salutary teaching with which souls are nourished and invigorated; he brings forth the spiritual wine that truly gladdens the heart, brings forth the medicine with which truly deadly diseases of the mind are healed, brings forth the antidotes effective against the poison of the ancient serpent. In sum, whatever falls properly under the care of a king is earthly and temporary, but what a priest handles is divine, is heavenly, is eternal. The gulf between the royal and the pastoral office is just as great as that between heaven and earth, between body and soul, between the transient and the eternal.

In this evaluation please consider not what man assigns to man but what the nature of the office itself merits. I know that a royal sceptre is more highly valued than a bishop's crook, a crown than a mitre; yet the fact that we see pastors generally held in contempt these days derives for the most part (if we want to admit the truth) from their own fault. It is clear from ancient literature that bishops were once valued most highly, not only in the eyes of the people but also in the eyes of monarchs, and were customarily all but worshipped. The kissing of hands, knees, and vestments bears witness to this; I do not recall reading of the kissing of feet among ancient writers, though the sinful woman of the Gospel planted kisses on Jesus' feet,[840] and devout women grasped his feet when he had returned to life after the resurrection.[841] That was not the obligation of respect but the emotion of warmest love, though the Lord is greater than any honour we may pay him. The elder Theodosius[842] shows this when he obeyed

* * * * *

840 Luke 7:36–50

841 Matt 28:9

842 Theodosius the Great (379–95) made Orthodox Christianity the state religion, outlawing Arianism and all other non-Orthodox sects. Erasmus' likely source for this historical information and what follows are Beatus Rhenanus' three editions (Basel 1523, 1528, and 1535) of the histories of the early Christian writers: see eg *Autores historiae ecclesiasticae Eusebii Pamphili Caesariensis libri novem, Ruffino interprete. Ruffini presbyteri Aquileiensis, libri duo. Item ex Theodorito Episcopo Cyrensi, Sozomeno, & Socrate Constantinopolitano libri duodecim, versi ab Epiphanio Scholastico, adbreviati per Cassiodorum Senatorem: unde illis Tripartitae historiae vocabulum. Omnia recognita ad antiqua exemplaria Latina, per Beatum Rhenanum. PRAETEREA NON ANTE EXCUSA Nicephori ecclesiastica historia, incerto interprete. Victoris episcopi libri III De persecutione Vandalica. Theodoriti libri V graece, ut sunt ab autore conscripti* (Basel: Froben 1535); he also published an edition at Basel in 1539. Beatus Rhenanus dedicated these works to Stanislaus

Ambrose's exclusion of him from the church;[843] when ordered to go away into the place of penitents, he obeyed, he put aside his royal majesty and lay upon the ground in public, tear-stained he asked forgiveness and did not oppose him when he prescribed the rules for reparation, and finally, when commanded to leave the sanctuary, he complied, excusing himself modestly. But how did the bishop of a single city get such authority? Because he was a true bishop, and that severity of his displayed no pride or arrogance but rather an authority worthy of a priest, to such an extent that the emperor was not ashamed to bear witness before others that he had found but one bishop, Ambrose, from whom he had learned how great is the difference between emperor and priest. The man who dictated laws to the world received from a priest the law that no edict of Caesar had force before the thirtieth day;[844]

* * * * *

Thurzó, bishop of Olmütz (1471/2–1540). See Martin Rothkegel *Der lateinische Briefwechsel des Olmützer Bischofs Stanislaus Thurzó: Eine ostmitteleuropäische Humanistenkorrespondenz der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Hamburg 2007) 70–3, 159–71, 193–200. The sixth-century disciple of Cassiodorus, Epiphanius Scholasticus, compiled and translated into Latin from the Greek these early Christian authors (Theodoret of Cyrus, Sozomen, and Socrates of Constantinople), later revised by Cassiodorus under the title *Tripartite History*. The specific information given in Beatus Rhenanus' edition occurs in Theodoret of Cyrus' history, chapters 30–2 522–4; see NPNF 2nd series 3 book V chapters 17–19 142–4. For Beatus Rhenanus' edition, see: Stéphane Ratti 'Beatus Rhenanus éditeur de l'*Historia Tripertita* de Cassiodore-Epiphane' in *Beatus Rhenanus lecteur et éditeur des textes anciens*, ed James Hirstein (Turnhout 2000) 299–326; John F. D'Amico *Theory and Practice in Renaissance Textual Criticism: Beatus Rhenanus between Conjecture and History* (Berkeley 1988) especially chapter 5: 'From Text to Context I: Beatus Rhenanus and Ecclesiastical History' 143–72.

843 The significance of Ambrose prevailing over Theodosius is made clear by Theodoret of Cyrus (c 393–466) *Ecclesiastical History* chapters 30–2 522–4 (Beatus Rhenanus edition) and NPNF 2nd series 3 book V chapters 17–19 142–4. Theodoret relates that Ambrose 'forbade him to step over the sacred threshold' and demanded that Theodosius do public penance after 'multitudes were mowed down like ears of corn in harvest-tide' (143) in reprisal for a great sedition at Thessalonika in which several magistrates were killed. Ambrose made clear to the emperor 'the differences between an emperor and a priest'; Theodosius confesses that 'Ambrose alone deserves the title of bishop' (145). See Theodoret of Cyrus 5.17 NPNF 2nd series 2 143–5. See also the account by Paulinus *Vita sancti Ambrosii* chapter 8 section 26 66–7 and 141 n6. Ambrose delivered the funeral oration for Theodosius *De obitu Theodosii oratio* (*On the Death of Emperor Theodosius*), found in *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose* trans Leo P. McCauley et al FOC 22 303–32.

844 According to Theodoret, Ambrose required that Theodosius, as a condition of his penance, enact as law the provision that thirty days elapse before

this law helped the people of Antioch when they had committed a more grievous offence than had the Thessalonians.[845] Not only Theodosius but many other monarchs as well have submitted the royal sceptre to a priest's authority. Why so? Because they saw virtues worthy of a bishop shining in them. For outstanding virtue has a remarkable power of impelling human minds to love and admiration of itself. With it St Basil scorned Modestus,[846] the emperor's prefect, with impunity, and not only with impunity but he impelled that truculent man to admiration of Christian fortitude; with it he cast down Eusebius,[847] the prefect of Pontus, when he was swollen with anger, and soon after helped him in his dejection. With it he had a startling effect on the emperor Valens, who was hostile to the Catholics and favoured the Arians, for as soon as he entered the church, he was struck by the general scene, the man's physical appearance, his steadfast gaze and dignified countenance; then Basil deterred him from his intended cruelty by his wise conversation and would even have called him back from the Arian faction, which he loved with a mad passion, had not the stubborn wickedness of others later overturned what the bishop's authority had convinced him of. The fearless constancy of the Christians whom he had ordered to be executed so moved the wicked Julian,[848] born for the subversion

* * * * *

executing the law when a death sentence or proscription had been signed against anyone, after which time the case would be brought to the emperor to review in tranquillity (144); see *Ecclesiastical History* 5.17 NPNF 2nd series 2 143–5.

845 The troubles occurred in Antioch three years earlier as a result of a new tax to pay for the war; this was years before the revolt in Thessalonika. Again Erasmus is following Theodoret: *Ecclesiastical History* 5.19; cf Sozomen 7.23 392–3.

846 Flavius Domitius Modestus, praetorian prefect of the East (369–77) under Emperor Valens (364–78). See Allen Ep 2611:438 (preface to Froben's Greek Basil *Opera*). See Gregory of Nazianzus *The Panegyric on S. Basil* 43.48–52 NPNF 2nd series 7 411–12; and Gregory of Nyssa *Contra Eunomium* NPNF 2nd series 5 49; see especially Theodoret *Ecclesiastical History* 4.16 NPNF 2nd series 2 119–20.

847 For Basil and Eusebius, prefect of Pontus, see Gregory of Nazianzus *The Panegyric on S. Basil* 43.48–52 NPNF 2nd series 7 413; for Valens see ibidem 410–12. For Basil's conflict with Valens, see Gregory of Nazianzus *The Panegyric on S. Basil* 43.48–52, 55–7 NPNF 2nd series 7 395–422 and Theodoret *Ecclesiastical History* 4.16 NPNF 2nd series 2 119–20.

848 Julian the Apostate (361–3); see ODCC 910. For Basil and Julian, see Sozomen 5.4 328–9. For Erasmus and Julian, see Jean Larmat 'Julien dans les textes du XVI^{e} siècle' in *L'empereur Julien: De l'histoire à la légende (331–1715)* 2 vols, ed Renè Braun and Jean Richer (Paris 1978) I 303–5.

of the Christian religion, that he recalled his cruel edict. What of the fact that Allebichus,[849] master of the imperial palace, so honoured the saintliness of the monk Macedonius,[850] a simple mountain dweller ignorant of all literature, that he heeded his advice quite willingly, abandoned his savage commission, and turned the emperor to a different opinion? What a fashionable and eloquent ambassador would not have secured, he secured, or more truly demanded, a despicable old man, uneducated, unsophisticated, and covered in the cheapest rags. What moved Allebichus? What moved the emperor? Truth unalloyed and a piety ignorant of pretence. If priests today showed this, and showed it constantly and without pretence, men's minds would not yet have so degenerated that they are disinclined to honour outstanding piety.

Now if, as the Greek proverb has it, the more difficult anything is, the fairer it is,[851] see how much easier it is to be a good king than a good bishop. The king uses fear and punishments to compel to obedience those he cannot persuade. He has an armed escort, he has troops, he has prisons, sacks, swords, and countless forms of death; he can kill with a nod whomever he pleases. But it is much easier to compel by force than to persuade by speech; it is simpler to kill the body than to turn the mind to goodness. And yet this very thing, which is inherently most difficult, the preacher does mainly with the tongue; instead of weapons he has sacred teaching, tears, prayers, and a blameless life. As Isaiah teaches, 'And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked, and righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.'[852] These are the weapons of justice, armed with which on the right and left the preacher accomplishes such difficult deeds, by leading rather than by compelling. Bodies can be compelled; minds must be turned, since they cannot be compelled. How much sweat do you think must be expended here by the priest so that he can heal with the word those who are

* * * * *

849 Allebichus (Allobich, Allobichus, Elebichus). See Theodoret *Ecclesiastical History* NPNF 2nd series 3 book V chapter 19 145–6, who calls him *magister militum* 'a military commander.' Erasmus refers to him as *aulae magister* 'master of the imperial palace.' See J.R. Martindale *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* II: AD 395–527 (Cambridge 1980) 61.

850 For the life of Macedonius (the Barley-eater), see Theodoret of Cyrrhus (Cyrus) *A History of the Monks of Syria* trans R.M. Price (Kalamazoo, Mich 1985) 100–7; for the incident here see 102–3 and Theodoret *Ecclesiastical History* NPNF 2nd series 3 book V chapter 19 145–6.

851 *Adagia* II i 12 *Difficilia quae pulchra* 'Good things are difficult.'

852 Isa 11:4–5

ailing not with one but with many illnesses, prop up someone who is slipping, recall to life someone who is without life and lacks even an awareness of evil? By giving money, the king easily enriches whom he wishes; but to convince a miser to scorn gold, to convince someone accustomed to robbery to be kind to the poor, to persuade someone who before did not so much possess wealth as be possessed by it to impoverish himself by spontaneous generosity in order to grow rich in spiritual wealth, that indeed takes great and persistent effort. The king ties a thief in a noose but does not remove the flaw in his mind; he stretches the robber upon the wheel but does not cure the disease of robbing; he punishes adultery and incest but does not implant the love of chastity. The priest does not have the right to kill, but his work is to call back to life with his effective voice minds that have been buried long since in vices, not for four days, but sometimes for forty or sixty years. He often deals with vipers who close up their ears; they push him away when he teaches, do not suffer his warnings, threaten him when he rebukes. This wise enchanter must use effective enchantments[853] to turn the asp into a lamb. But if someone should exaggerate the dignity of princes (which I certainly am not diminishing), let him consider that the priest is father and nourisher and teacher and judge of monarchs too;[854] through him they are Christians, through him they have been imbued with the sacraments of the church, through him they have learned the law of the Lord and the way of salvation, through him they are called back from error if ever they tend towards ill-judged schemes. And that this must be so has been shown in examples from the Old Testament also; at 4 Kings 22 the priest Hilkiah sends to King Josiah through the scribe Shaphan a book that was read out in his presence and warned him of what had been overlooked.[855] Again at Chronicles 23 the priest Jehoiada in the temple hands a book of law to the king who is to be anointed;[856] the same thing that I mentioned a little earlier occurs at 2 Chronicles 24.[857] If the only Christian king is one who administers his realm according to the divine laws, it is a priest who presents, reads, and explains the text; if anointing makes a king, it is a priest who administers it. But if those who administer external unction to a king are regarded as being of the highest dignity, how much loftier is it to bestow

* * * * *

853 On vipers and enchantments, cf Ps 57:5–6 (Vulg), 58:5–6.

854 This again is the lesson of Ambrose's rebuke of Theodosius the Great; see 377–8 above.

855 4 Kings 22 (= 2 Kings 22:8–20)

856 2 Chron 23:11

857 2 Chron 24:20

a spiritual unction on the minds of kings? Which then is more outstanding, the one who gives birth or the one who is born, the one who nourishes or the one who is nourished, the teacher or the pupil, the one who corrects or the one who is corrected, the one who anoints the skin or the one who anoints the mind? The king owes honour to those from whom he was born to this world according to the body, but how much more honour does he owe to the one through whom he was reborn in the spirit to God and heaven! A prince owes to a priest the best thing he has according to the better part of himself, and he is subject to him according to the nobler portion of himself, not to mention that, as was just said, he learns from a priest how to administer correctly this very realm that has become his lot.

From this learn at least how difficult is the office of the preacher, who owes counsel, teaching, and correction[858] not only to the people but to monarchs as well. For he is, as the Apostle says, debtor to the wise and to the foolish,[859] in fact to boys and girls, to youths and maidens, to husbands and wives, to old men and old women, to magistrates and merchants, to sailors and cobblers, to soldiers and farmers, and finally to pimps and prostitutes; to the lowest and to the highest he is debtor. The shepherd of sheep tends only one kind of creature, whose nature is not so difficult to know; the cowherd easily learns the nature of his animal, as do the swineherd and the sheepherder as well; those who tend elephants learn the nature of a single animal with no great trouble. But in this flock there are so many kinds of animals, so many hybrids, that Africa scarcely produces more.[860] Moreover, it requires no little effort to learn the nature of all and to apply to each what is suitable, especially since there is no animal more wily and more changeable than man;[861] his heart is fraught with caves and recesses, and he turns every colour like an octopus or chamaeleon,[862] more changeable even than Proteus[863] himself. Bulls are enraged by red, elephants by white, tigers driven to madness by the noise of drums, lions provoked if someone

* * * * *

858 Cf 2 Tim 3:16.

859 Rom 1:14

860 See *Adagia* III vii 10 *Semper Africa novi aliquid apportat* 'Africa always produces something novel'; cf Pliny *Naturalis historia* 8.17.42. See book 2 CWE 68 476–7.

861 Cf Sophocles *Antigone* 332–74. On the changeable nature of man, see 'Proteus' n863 below.

862 For 'octopus' (*polypi/polypus*), see *Adagia* II iii 91 *Polypi* 'Polyps.' For 'chamaeleon,' see *Adagia* III iv 1 *Chamaeleonte mutabilior* 'As changeable as a chameleon.'

863 'Proteus': Greek mythological character capable of changing appearance at any time. See *Adagia* II ii 74 *Proteo mutabilior* 'As many shapes as Proteus,' which also explains 'changeable.'

regards them with sidelong glances, raging horses calmed by the sound of smacking lips. It is not so difficult to observe in individual animals the features that are common to each; but in a single human being you will find whatever exists in all types of animal, though you add the monstrosities of Libya as well.[864] What of the fact that bears are shut up in pens, lions behind bars, and animals likely to harm are restrained by force? This shepherd of ours has only the power of persuasion.

But I return to princes, whose ears are often tender, accustomed to flattery (not to say corrupted by adulation), intolerant of frank advice, arrogant from Fortune's indulgence, crippled by luxury. Do you think it a matter of slight skill to handle temperaments of this sort and to use persuasion to send under Christ's yoke[865] those whom you could not compel? Not everyone is competent to apply his hand to a noble and naturally fierce horse; but it requires much greater skill to teach a prince in such a way that you convince him of what is best, advise him so that he obeys, rebuke him without his blazing anger turning him to the worse, and finally to censure the faults of princes in public in such a way as not to provoke the people to sedition and rebellion.[866]

A certain special praise was earned in the past by those who scorned the world with all its ceremonies and pleasures, retreated far away into the rugged wastelands, lived a rough life in the haunts of beasts or in caves, separating themselves from all contact with men and imposing a harsher regimen upon themselves than that suffered by those deported to a desert island.[867] But, in the opinion of Chrysostom, the man who provides a good pastor to a congregation provides something that is both much more difficult and much holier.[868] His very solitude renders a monk safe from the

* * * * *

864 Libya was known for its exotic creatures. See *Adagia* III vii 10 *Semper Africa novi aliquid apportat* 'Africa always produces something novel,' where Erasmus quotes Pliny *Historia mundi* 8.17.42: 'Libya always brings forth something new.' See 382 and n860 above.

865 Cf Matt 11:29–30.

866 In book 2 CWE 68 637 and book 4 CWE 68 1049 Erasmus repeats this salutary admonition that preachers are not to provoke sedition and rebellion but encourage obedience and submission, even when princes act in godless ways. Chomarat suggests that Erasmus has in mind here certain inconsiderate preachers whose words inflamed the people in the Peasants War, see ASD V-4 177 852n. For preaching at the time of the Peasants War, see Justus Maurer *Prediger im Bauernkrieg* (Stuttgart 1979).

867 Erasmus' picture calls to mind Athanasius' *Vita Antonii* and Jerome's *Vita S. Pauli* and *Vita S. Hilarionis*; see NPNF 2nd series 4 188–221; 6 299–315.

868 John Chrysostom *De sacerdotio* 6.2–10 NPNF 1st series 9 75–80.

many provocations and temptations of vice, and it is not so great a matter to manage the care of a single animal, though this too is a great matter; but as the pastor maintains his solitary watch over everyone, as he tends his flock composed of so many different personalities, as he is compelled to have dealings with the honest and dishonest alike, to attend banquets, to see every day what he is not allowed to desire, as he is assailed by the scorn of some, soothed by the flattery of others, attacked by the accusations of others, frightened by the threats of others, tempted by the largesse of others, as he humours the violence of princes, in short, as he is shaken on all sides by so many siege engines, how, I ask, could he stand firm, unless he has a heart of adamant[869] fortified on all sides by much learning, much philosophy, and many gifts of the mystical Spirit?

And so, since the priest bears so heavy a burden upon his shoulders, since he holds so outstanding an office, how great is the ingratitude of certain congregations who as an insult call 'common' the one through whom they are Christians, whom they have as their teacher of devotion, by whose intervention they are reconciled to God. How seriously misguided are princes who contemptuously misuse bishops as servants. On the other hand, how ignorant of their own dignity are bishops who deem it a wonderful stroke of fortune to become the servants of kings, whose teachers and guides they ought to be! Finally, how greatly mistaken are monks, however austere, who prefer their own way of life to the order of bishops and pastors. The pastor of a single little town, of a single village who performs his office correctly is to be preferred to many Carthusians and Brigittines.[870] Let no one take this as an expression of contempt for monks; it is not an insult to be less esteemed than your betters, but it is arrogance, when you are inferior, to wish to be regarded as the equal of those more outstanding. Yet the flocks of monks owe to their superiors the honour that a congregation owes to its parish priest, nor should there be pride or haughtiness among the members of the same body. Each has his own gift from the same Spirit[871] and has it for the benefit of all, but there must be rank among the members of the body in order to avoid sedition. Domination, ambition, insolence, and the sedition that arises from these must be kept at bay. Let the one who is greater

* * * * *

869 *adamantinum*; cf Ezek 3:9; cf also Zec 7:12, where the prophet uses 'the heart of adamantine' in a contrary sense, castigating the people of Israel for the hardening of their hearts 'in order not to hear the law and the words that the Lord of hosts had sent by his spirit through the former prophets.'

870 On Carthusians and Brigittines, see n785 above.

871 See 1 Cor 12.

surpass the inferior in honour; let the one who is lesser reverently acknowledge his superior, inasmuch as according to Christ's teaching he who is first in rank in the hierarchy of the church[872] is especially the servant of all. He who will stoop lower from love of Christ and a zeal to help his neighbour is truly the greater for it, and the more honour is owed him the less honour he claims for himself. Certainly a custom that we have seen among the Italians merits no approval: an ordinary monk, of no worth or learning, takes first place at dinner though uninvited, with the polite excuse, 'You won't mind; you know this is my place,' as he points to his habit.[873] What? Do you wear a humble garment in order to be the more esteemed?[874] On the other hand, the custom that we see in certain families of the powerful also deserves no approval: a priest with a towel over his shoulder carries a basin and pours the water for those who are about to eat and stands bareheaded throughout the banquet ministering to the laity who are seated at table. But priests themselves are largely at fault for their becoming cheapened in this way. When they show themselves more like the laity than like priests, they are scorned by the laity, as in the words of Hosea, 'Because you have rejected knowledge, I shall reject you from performing as a priest for me.'[875] Moreover, it requires no ordinary prudence to be gentle towards everyone while nevertheless maintaining the authority of your office, to be familiar, modest, and friendly towards subordinates without familiarity and gentleness breeding contempt. The priest must therefore be advised to preserve the decorum of the role that he has undertaken; the congregation must be advised to remember what it owes to those entrusted with the care of their souls and not to consider how much Conrad or Walter is worth but the function he is performing and whose place he is taking. Whatever honour is paid to a man out of respect for Christ is paid to Christ, not to the man.

But I hear some objecting, 'They do not perform the role of Christ properly.' That is very difficult for a man to judge, and even if it is clear,

* * * * *

872 *ecclesiastica hierarchia*; Erasmus means here the concrete institution of the church and its various offices, where the bishop as head is 'the servant of all' in his diocese. Erasmus might be alluding to the title popes have used since the papacy of Gregory the Great (590–604), 'servant of the servants of God' (*servus servorum Dei*). See also Matt 23:11 and Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite *De ecclesiastica hierarchia* (*The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*) trans Thomas L. Campbell (Lanham, Md 1981).

873 Erasmus refers to this as an Italian custom; he might have come across examples of such behaviour in his visit to Italy in 1506–9.

874 See Matt 20:26–7, 23:11–12.

875 Hos 4:6

nevertheless some honour is due to the office itself for the sake of public tranquillity, since the Apostle teaches us to pay due honour to those placed over us, even idolaters, until the Lord himself gives a clear sign that they are to be removed.[876] This sign is not always given by a miracle through good men, but it is also frequently given through bad men; for example, he abolished the sacrifices of the Jews through Titus by the complete destruction of the temple and the carrying off of the monuments on which their religion rested (they formerly boasted of the tablets of Moses, the Sacred Ark, the rod of Aaron, and certain other things of this kind).[877] Likewise he showed through the Goths and other barbarian tribes that the Romans were to be deprived of their empire,[878] which at the beginning happened to serve the gospel, but its destruction was expedient afterwards since the remnants of ancient paganism could not otherwise be wholly uprooted.[879] But let us leave aside these tangential subjects and return now to explaining the dignity of the preacher's office.

The loftiness of the prophets whom God has thought worthy of his personal address and through whom as intermediaries he wanted his inscrutable will[880] to be unlocked for men approaches nearest to the authority of divinity.[881] Moreover, as we began to say earlier, there are two kinds of

* * * * *

876 See Rom 13:1, 7; Heb 13:17. Scripture does not say, 'Until the Lord himself gives a clear sign that they are to be removed.' Erasmus likely means that it is God's work to remove those he no longer wishes to rule, as the examples below illustrate. See especially *Annotationes in Romanos* CWE 56 346–53; Erasmus states that the only exception Paul makes is 'for the interests of faith and piety'; otherwise Christians 'should comply even with tyrants and bear with them' (347).

877 For the account of the Roman general Titus (son of Vespasian) and the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, see Josephus *De bello Judaica* books 5–7; for the triumph at Rome featuring the spoils from the war with the Jews, see 7.5–7.

878 For the invasions of the Goths, Erasmus might be drawing on Jerome's preface to his commentary on the book of Ezekiel, written after hearing news of Alaric's sack of Rome in 410; and certainly on Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, written in response to this event. See Jerome's preface to his commentary on Ezekiel NPNF 2nd series 6 499–500; and Ep 127.12–14, 257–8.

879 Erasmus' brief comment on the fall of Rome suggests a view of church history similar to Augustine's as developed in the *De civitate Dei.* Erasmus does not continue his exposition of God's providential direction of history, nor does he give readers topics for preaching on God's hand in history.

880 Cf Rom 11:33. Erasmus defines 'prophet' as God's spokesman to interpret his 'inscrutable will.'

881 See 1 Cor 14:1–3, where Paul puts 'prophets' in the first rank, that is, those who can expound the mysteries of God and 'speak to others for their edification, exhortation, and comfort'; cf 2 Tim 3:16, 4:2.

prophecy, one which opens the past or predicts the future, another which explains present mysteries or reveals secrets without reference to time.[882] In the Gospel of John, the Lord is told, 'You are a prophet'[883] because he had revealed his mysteries to the woman of Samaria. But the Jews deemed worthy of this name only one who was distinguished by greater than human powers, and so those who had the highest opinion of Christ honoured him at that time with the name of prophet.[884] In fact when the Lord himself wanted to implant in the minds of the Jews, who had a high regard for John the Baptist, some understanding of his special and even more than human qualities, he pronounced John to be more than a prophet.[885] But if those to whom God has spoken, namely the prophets, have been called gods,[886] what great praise it is to be called more than a prophet! Yet he who was lesser in the kingdom of heaven was infinitely greater than this man,[887] since by his splendour he obscured the glory of all the prophets, though to be obscured in this way is to be illuminated. But, just as the power of miracles has flourished only occasionally ever since the time of this heavenly prophet, so this type of ancient prophecy was not removed gradually at the light of the gospel but grew cold or, to speak more correctly, was changed into another loftier kind. Once people ran to the oracle and to the ephod,[888] seeking a sign; now the Scriptures take the place of oracles, faith the place of miracles. Isaiah 8 shows this, saying, 'To the law rather and to the witness.'[889] If we believe in the Scriptures correctly understood, what need for miracles?

Moreover, the prophets of the New Testament, trained to compare the spiritual with the spiritual,[890] enable us to understand the Scriptures by

* * * * *

882 This twofold meaning of prophet is crucial in Erasmus: the Old Testament prophets spoke of things to come and especially of Christ. But prophets of the New Testament interpret the mystical sense of what had been predicted: John the Baptist identified Jesus, as do Paul and Philip, the apostles; and since their time it has been the role of the *ecclesiastes* to carry on this lofty role. Therefore, without Scripture interpreting Scripture, which is what the prophet does, the message is lost. As Erasmus presents it, the Jews hold on to the first form of prophecy without accepting the second, thereby closing off recognizing what was signified by the prophets of the Old Testament.

883 John 4:19

884 Matt 16:14, 21:11, and 46; Mark 6:15, 8:28; Luke 7:16 and 39, 9:8 and 19, 24:19; John 4:19, 6:14, 7:40, 9:17; Acts 3:22–6, 7:37

885 Matt 11:9

886 John 10:34–5; cf Ps 82:6 (Vulg 81:6).

887 Ie John the Baptist; Matt 11:11

888 Exod 25:7; see n426 above and Exod 39:2–7.

889 Isa 8:20

890 Cf 1 Cor 2:13.

digging out the mysteries of the Scriptures according to their spiritual meaning, offering 'the new and the old' from their treasure stores.[891] What good does it do the Jews that they have memorized their prophets? Those prophets need other prophets; otherwise what St Paul writes about the philosophers of the world can truly be said of the Jews, that 'though they professed themselves wise,' they became 'foolish' and 'vain in their thoughts.'[892] The Jews have become more foolish; though they read so many allegories, so many prophecies about Christ every day, they nevertheless not only do not recognize the one designated by these but even pursue him with an implacable hatred. What is responsible? The fact that they lack this new and loftier kind of prophecy to open the mystical meaning of Scripture.

Christ held first place in this kind of prophecy, after him the apostles inspired by the spirit of Christ, and among them especially St Paul, then the other doctors of the church. Now, since it is admitted that the Holy Spirit poured out its gifts more generously and widely after the Lord was received into heaven[893] than it had done in the Old Testatment, Paul bestows his highest commendation among all the gifts of the Spirit on prophecy,[894] without which he deems a gathering of Christians to be virtually useless. Moreover, he means by prophecy not a precognition of the future but skill in digging out the mystical meaning that is hidden and buried, so to speak, in the Holy Scriptures.[895] No one who is without the spirit of Christ can be truly suited to this office; for just as only an artist can judge about art, so no one but a spiritual person pronounces truly about spiritual Scripture. There is indeed less obscurity in the New Testament, yet here too there is need of prophets; and there will be need until the end of the world, for through them the church flourishes or fails, grows or shrinks.

Now consider, please, which kind of prophet is by its own nature more lofty. Among the less lofty was Balaam,[896] a base man, and it is also attested in the proverbs of the Hebrews that Saul was counted among the prophets.[897] Indeed in a gospel parable those who have given out prophecies in Jesus'

* * * * *

891 Matt 13:52
892 Rom 1:21–2
893 Acts 2:4; cf Heb 9:24.
894 1 Cor 14:4–5. See *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* 14.1–3 ASD VI-8 266–8.
895 Here Erasmus identifies the new prophet as one skilled in exegesis and who in preaching can reveal the hidden meaning of Scripture, teaching this to the faithful.
896 Num 22:20–2; see also Josh 13:22.
897 1 Sam 10:11–13

name are told by him, 'I do not know you.'[898] In addition, even in the Gospel itself Caiaphas pronounces a true prophecy concerning Christ.[899] Why am I speaking of Caiaphas when demons speak the truth about Christ in evangelical literature,[900] and in Acts the possessed girl gives true witness to the apostles?[901] Finally, even today astrologers, palm readers, 'belly talkers,'[902] and wizards predict many future occurrences, but there is no particularly great profit in this foreknowledge; for if what they predict is going to come to pass, precognition of the inevitable is the height of misery: if it does not, the very fear of misfortune is a great part of misfortune.[903]

But enough of the unpraiseworthy; let us discuss the praiseworthy. Those sixteen prophets admitted by canonical Scripture[904] who undoubtedly prophesied about Christ were enveloped in such obscurities that they were not understood even after what they had predicted was revealed so clearly to view. Their prophecies seemed riddles, or rather dreams, until that heavenly Spirit whose inspiration has been the source of all truth flowed more bountifully into the minds of the new prophets, expounding the riddles of types and undoing the wrappings of prophecy.[905] Which is more important, the temporary or the eternal? 'The Law and the prophets

* * * * *

898 Matt 7:22–3

899 John 11:50–2. The high priest Caiaphas' prophecy stated: 'You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed' (11:50). Though an evil man and urging what was politically expedient, he did not grasp the profound spiritual significance and truth of his ironic utterance.

900 See Mark 1:23–4, 5:2–7; Luke 4:33–5, 8:27–8.

901 Acts 16:16–19

902 Latin *ventriloqui*. One today does not associate ventriloquism with the phenomenon of those who appeared possessed of a spirit speaking from the belly and predicting future events. Erasmus might well have been reminded here of this kind of fraud given in Lucian's *Alexander*; cf *Adagia* II iv 21.

903 Cf Cicero *De divinatione* 2 passim; Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 14.1.36.

904 See DS 179, *Decretum Damasi seu De explanatione fidei* (AD 382).

905 For allegory and typology in Erasmus, see especially CWE 39 n117, which gives an extensive discussion of allegory, typology, the senses of Scripture, and principles of biblical interpretation in Erasmus' writings; see also *Augustine* 'Typology' 855–7; M.F. Wiles, 'Origen as Biblical Scholar' in *The Cambridge History of the Bible* I: *From the Beginnings to Jerome* ed P.R. Ackroyd and C.F. Evans (Cambridge 1976) 454–89, especially 482–5; and Gerard E. Caspary *Politics and Exegesis: Origen and the Two Swords* (Berkeley 1979) chapter 1 'The Sword and the Letter' 11–39.

until John,'[906] says the Lord, designating types by the word 'law' and predictions produced about Christ by the term 'prophets.' So, while that kind of prophecy was necessary before the coming of the Redeemer, it largely ceased after the brilliant light of the gospel shone forth, not because the church has been deprived of this gift but because the nature of the times is different. What the prophets had promised would come has all been revealed, has been laid out for all the senses; nothing is left but that final day[907] when the church is complete and each will receive his reward according to his deserts.[908] We do not need prophets to convince people of this, since the Lord himself foretold all this so clearly that no one can doubt unless he distrusts the canonical Scriptures. He wanted the fact to be well known to us; those who had seen him alive were told, 'He will come just as you saw him going into heaven.'[909] He wanted the day to be uncertain,[910] hence those people have always been ridiculous who have tried to appear prescient in a matter that the Lord did not want known beforehand and that, if it could be known beforehand, is more profitably left unknown. But this second kind of prophecy will be necessary for all parts of the globe until the world's last days; human souls can no more survive without it than their bodies without food and drink,[911] inasmuch as mystical Scripture is living bread descending from heaven, which bestows eternal life upon those who eat it:[912] but someone is needed to break this bread appropriately and distribute it according to the Redeemer's example.[913] It is a spring of water leaping up to eternal life:[914] but people are needed to draw it from its hidden channels and proffer it to those that thirst for righteousness.[915] Finally, the flesh of Christ is truly food,[916] the blood of Christ is truly drink; unless the hearts of the congregation are fed and refreshed daily with these through preachers, they cannot maintain life, true life I mean, for the life of the body is a shadow of life rather than life:[917] only true food and drink

* * * * *

906 Matt 11:13
907 Matt 24:3–50; Mark 13:4–8; Luke 21:6–36
908 See Matt 25:32–46.
909 Acts 1:11
910 Matt 24:36
911 Cf Matt 4:4; Luke 4:4; Deut 8:3.
912 John 6:33, 50–1
913 Matt 26:26; Luke 24:30–2; 1 Cor 10:16
914 John 4:14
915 Matt 5:6
916 John 6:56
917 Cf Matt 10:26–31.

can give true life.[918] The teachers of the church and ministers alike dispense both to those at the table; it is the Lord himself who gives the banquet, who through the hands of his disciples bestows upon the hungry multitude the food, that is, the word of life, whose stewards are bishops and those that fulfil the function of bishops.[919] Through it those who do not exist are born to God, through it infants are nourished in Christ with milk until they grow and can take solid food,[920] through it they are strengthened against the woes of this life,[921] through it they are stirred to hope of heavenly life,[922] through it they are strengthened when weak,[923] healed when sick,[924] restored to life when dead.[925] This is the ministry of preachers. Who could not see that its dignity is no longer royal but more than angelic? For it is more to be an evangelist than to be an angel; an angel merely announces, but bad things also are announced –what an evangelist announces is happy and peaceful.[926] The former says, 'Take the boy and his mother and flee into Egypt, and stay there until I advise you.'[927] What does the latter do? He causes Christ to be born in us, to grow up, to be kept, to be perfected,[928] which is man's true and complete happiness. Those who spoke in tongues were themselves prophets as well,[929] for the Spirit spoke mysteries in them; yet in the church this type is so useless in itself that if some unbeliever or outsider entered the gathering, he would say at once, 'Those men are mad.'[930] I think that we would say the same if we saw Saul dancing and prophesying naked all day among the naked prophets.[931] On the other hand, when a prophet of the second kind speaks,[932] that mocker is transformed into an admirer, and he falls

* * * * *

918 Cf John 6:31–5. When speaking of dispensing the word of God, Erasmus often follows Johannine theology, presenting as virtually indistinguishable the word of God as preached and the sacrament of the Eucharist.
919 For 'those that fulfil the function of bishops,' see 328 above.
920 1 Cor 3:1–2
921 Eph 3:16
922 Titus 1:2, 3:7
923 Rom 1:11
924 Matt 14:14; Mark 6:13
925 Matt 11:5
926 Erasmus is playing on the Greek word ἄγγελος 'angel, messenger' and 'evangelist' (*evangelista*, ie bringer of good news [εὐαγγέλιον 'good news, gospel']).
927 Matt 2:13
928 See Gal 4:19 and *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Galatas* CWE 42 118.
929 See 1 Cor 14:1–5.
930 See 1 Cor 14:23.
931 1 Sam 19:24
932 Ie the prophet of the New Testament, one who interprets Scripture.

upon his face[933] and acknowledges that God speaks in those who relate the mysteries of Scripture thoughtfully and sincerely. It is the same Spirit that dispenses its gifts according to the condition of the times for the salvation of the human race. If you consider the source, the dignity is equal; if you consider the quality of the times, the need for the latter prophecy is greater and its utility more fruitful. There is a very great difference between the synagogue and the church; so there is no small difference between a prophet of the synagogue and a prophet of the church. How few children the synagogue has borne for the Lord, but to what a numerous progeny the church has given and continues to give birth every day – and through whom but through preachers?[934] Once there was catechism before baptism, and that from the Lord's instruction, 'Go, teach all nations, baptizing them.[935] Behold at once, at the very beginning, the office of the evangelist. The catechist teaches[936] and imparts the fundamentals of the faith to the unlearned, and through him mother church conceives fetuses, as it were, and gives birth to them in baptism by the same man's ministry.

Now weigh the difference in content. What does the prophet of the synagogue promise? 'You will live well and long in the land that the Lord will give you;[937] your sons will be as shoots of olive around your table, your wife will be as a fruitful vine on the sides of your house.'[938] What of the prophet of the church? 'If you believe in the Lord Jesus, all your sins will be forgiven free,[939] you will receive his spirit,[940] you will be placed in the rank of the children of God,[941] having already become a brother of Christ[942] and coheir of the heavenly kingdom,[943] and you will receive meanwhile a hundredfold in this world for what you have left.[944] And indeed it is not only a hundredfold but a hundred times a thousandfold, that joy of a clean and hopeful conscience, if it is compared to all the comforts that the

* * * * *

933 See Matt 17:6; Luke 5:12, 17:16; 1 Cor 14:25.
934 See Rom 10:17.
935 Matt 28:19
936 See Gal 6:6.
937 Deut 5:16
938 Ps 128:3 (Vulg 127:3)
939 See Matt 9:2; Luke 5:20, 7:48–9.
940 John 20:22–3
941 Matt 5:9; Luke 20:36; see also Rom 8:14.
942 Matt 12:50
943 Rom 8:17
944 Matt 19:29

world promises, and not even that in good faith.[945] Again, what does the old prophet threaten? "If you do not keep the laws of the Lord, the Lord will give your wife a sterile womb and dry breasts;[946] you will till the field and another will gather the fruit from it, you will plant a vineyard and you will not taste the wine from it." '[947] What of the new? 'Unless you are reborn from water and the Holy Spirit,[948] you will be dead even while you live in this world,[949] and in the time to come the eternal death of Gehenna awaits your soul and body.'[950] We have already touched to some degree upon the differences in the manner of teaching.[951]

But if so much honour was accorded the prophets of the synagogue, who used to forecast a future happiness as if from afar and did it under a veil, what is owed to the prophets of the church, who show a happiness that is here and now, and not only show it but also confer it where it is right, and do so clearly with no veils or riddles? What is simpler than to say, 'Have faith in the Lord Jesus'?[952] Further, what is more helpful than to use a washing[953] with water to turn a son of wrath into a son of love, an heir of eternal life?[954] Hence they are called not only prophets but, more appropriately, evangelists.

By the Lord's testimony John the Baptist was preferred to the ranks of the prophets because he did not predict Christ's coming in ambiguous oracles but pointed him out with his finger as he came.[955] But whom did he point out? The son of Mary and of a carpenter,[956] a mortal living among mortals like one of many, not yet celebrated for his miracles and teaching, not yet restored to life after defeating Satan, not yet taken back to heaven,[957]

* * * * *

945 See Acts 23:1, 24:16; Rom 9:1; 2 Cor 1:12, 4:2; 1 Tim 1:5, 3:9; 2 Tim 1:3; Heb 9:14, 10:2, and 22; 1 Pet 3:21.
946 Hos 9:14
947 See Hos 9:14; Deut 28:30 and 33.
948 John 3:5
949 1 Tim 5:6; cf Rev 3:1.
950 Matt 5:29; Mark 9:42
951 See eg 387–92 above.
952 See Eph 1:15; Phil 1:5; Acts 20:21; Col 1:4; cf Prov 3:5: 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart' (*Habe fiduciam in Domino ex toto corde tuo*).
953 That is, baptism. See Eph 5:26 where baptism is referred to as 'the laver of water in the word of life' (*aquae lavacrum*).
954 Col 1:13; Rom 8:17
955 John 1:29, 36; Matt 3:3, 14
956 Matt 13:55
957 Acts 1:11

not yet scattering most generously from on high his heavenly gifts[958] by sending the Spirit of the Father,[959] not yet sitting at the right hand of the Father in an equal share of power and glory.[960] If what John showed was great, what the prophets of the church show is greater, as they now show him triumphing in heaven, show him reigning in the souls of the faithful,[961] presiding over his church. The Baptist showed a Christ still of the flesh to the physical eyes of men, but now prophets show him in spiritual guise to the eyes of faith. Many then saw him and, being offended by his external appearance, scorned or even hated the sight of him;[962] but these point him out in such a way that those who gaze upon him are restored to life.[963] The Baptist showed what Paul in a way rejected, saying, 'Even if we once knew Christ according to the flesh, now we no longer know him.'[964] As a Jew, he knew the Lord according to the flesh; made spiritual, he knows him much more happily by faith. The Galatians had not seen Christ, and yet the Apostle affirms that Christ had been portrayed before their eyes because they had believed those who revealed him.[965] What is handled by the spirit is more evident than what is handled with the touch, and the tongue points more successfully than the corporeal finger.

The faithful prophets of this age should not be valued less because this power does not seem to be given, as it once was, by the inspiration of the Spirit[966] or by an obvious miracle but is, so to speak, bought with much sweat. Indeed, the greater the labour, the larger the reward. Miracles had their time, nor are there fewer miracles because the inspiration of the Spirit is silent; the altered nature of the times required this, and the gift of God is no less free because he determined to give it in this way. It is the same gift of the same Spirit but given differently according to the condition of the times,[967] and it must not be doubted that it is given in a more perfect way. It was expedient for the perfection of faith that the external signs that had been given to the unbelieving and unsure should be taken away from

* * * * *

958 See Eph 4:8.
959 Acts 2:2–4
960 Mark 13:26; Luke 4:6; Matt 26:64; 1 Pet 4:14
961 Luke 17:21; Rom 5:17, 21; Rev 22:5
962 See Isa 52:14–53:5; John 7:7, 15.
963 See John 3:14; Deut 5:12–15.
964 2 Cor 5:16
965 Gal 3:1
966 Cf John 3:8, 20:22 (*insufflavit*); Acts 2:2–4.
967 Erasmus often emphasizes that the times have changed greatly and that accommodations have to be made accordingly.

the senses. Moreover, who administers his office more perfectly, the teacher who uses beatings and terror to coerce a boy or the one who uses counsel to guide a boy placed under his control?[968] The Law was the teacher up until Christ;[969] the ancient prophets are its ministers. John the Baptist is midway between the Old and the New. Some traces of the already aging old prophecy remained for a time in the beginnings of the youthful church until the lights produced by lesser bodies were gradually obscured as the sun of evangelical truth shone throughout the whole world. No miracles occur in the sky, where everything seen is a miracle, for we call miracles things that happen outside the common run of human affairs; no one marvels at everyday things, even if they are more miraculous. It is called a great miracle that the Lord summoned a few lifeless people back to life, and no one marvels that living men are born every day from dead liquid.[970] The Lord once or twice multiplied loaves with his hands so that a very few sufficed for many thousands,[971] and no one marvels that every day an ear pregnant with sixty grains rises from a single dead grain of wheat.[972] To Matthew presiding at the custom house he said, 'Follow me,'[973] and he was changed on the spot and obeyed the call; we all marvel at this because it was displayed to the senses. But we marvel more that he called Lazarus, who was dead four days already, back to a life[974] that had soon to be exchanged again for death; how much more marvellous is it that so many weeds are turned into the Lord's excellent wheat at the voice of a single man,[975] that every day the mystical energy of the Spirit restores sixty-year-old corpses[976] to eternal life through the ministers of the church? We admire and gape at what is shown to the external senses; we do not admire something much more

* * * * *

968 Erasmus' rhetorical question here is thoroughly treated in *De pueris*, where he condemns physical punishment in the education of youth; see *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 326–31.

969 Gal 3:15–29

970 *liquor mortuus*; Chomarat states that this is 'sperm, dead because it is inert!'; see ASD V-4 193 111–12nn.

971 Matt 14:17–21, 15:32–8; Mark 6:35–44, 8:1–9; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–13

972 See John 12:24.

973 Matt 9:9

974 John 11:1–45

975 See Matt 13:25–30.

976 Chomarat states that Erasmus chose this adjective to symbolize a great age; according to Roman usage, at sixty years electors lost the right to vote. See ASD V-4 193 120n. At the time he wrote this part of *Ecclesiastes*, Erasmus himself was likely over sixty years of age. For the idea of 'the energy' (or 'action') of the Holy Spirit, see *De concordia* CWE 65 152 n82.

extraordinary that is done within. Peter prays, and Dorcas lives again in the body:[977] we are amazed; a good preacher speaks and rouses many souls from death, but we do not marvel to the same degree. He who raises Dorcas and he who converts the sinner is the same; but what God works in the soul of a sinner returning to his senses is greater than what he works in a corpse returning to life. The fact that Peter used to preach in everyone's language seemed a miracle to everyone,[978] and it was; how much more marvellous that about three thousand men were transformed into a new creature at a single speech of a fisherman![979] This is far more stupendous than the idea that Nebuchadnezzar was changed from a man into the shape of a bull, then changed back again from a bull into a man.[980] But it is characteristic of a commonplace and dull mind to admire more what is perceived with the eyes, ears, and touch; the spiritual man[981] judges otherwise. And so if Peter prayed long on bended knees, in response to the supplications of many women, to restore one mere woman to the life of the body (where being restored was only a double death), what must be done by the devout preacher, whose task is to recall to true life as many souls as possible that are rotting in sin as though in a tomb? Surely such considerations seem not to be weighed by those who mount the pulpit tipsy from lunch or dulled in the morning by the night's hangover, then break off, rather than complete, their sermon and run off to bouts of drinking. Come then, if someone were to declare a preacher the equal of those ancient prophets, would everyone not admit that a high rank has been assigned to him? And yet the thing itself convinces us that someone who administers the food of evangelical teaching to the Lord's flock is more excellent on many accounts, so long as he performs his duty sincerely and in good faith. If anyone is not persuaded of this, a cruder proof will be offered from which he may reach this conclusion. Which were in greater esteem in the beginnings of the church, Agabus with his companions, and the daughters of Philip,[982] or Peter and Paul? Even stones, I think, would admit that there is no comparison; nor, I think, is it unclear which brought greater benefit to the church. What did

* * * * *

977 Acts 9:36–42
978 Acts 2:4–12
979 Acts 2:41
980 Dan 4:30–1. Erasmus uses this same example to make a similar point in *Concio, sive Merdardus*, which he published in 1531; see *Colloquia* CWE 40 953.
981 Cf 1 Cor 2:13–15; 1 Cor 2:15: 'The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment.'
982 Acts 11:27–8, 21:8–15

Agabus provide? He foretold a coming famine and advised that the emergency be met with timely provision, not quite according to the perfect teaching of Christ, who had forbidden his followers to be concerned about tomorrow.[983] Again, when he took Paul's sash and bound his own feet at Caesarea, predicting that the owner of the sash would be bound at Jerusalem by the Jews and handed over to the heathen, what good did he accomplish?[984] Only that the Apostle left his saddened companions a sadder man, not because he feared the chains, since he was ready even to die for the name of Jesus, but because that blessed soul, all afire with love of his neighbours, was tormented by his friends' tears. But as to the prophecy, that is, the preaching of Peter and Paul, how great was the profit to the church! Agabus and those like Agabus had succeeded to the place of the ancient prophets; you, parish priest, and you, preacher, to whose place have you succeeded? Not to that of Agabus but to that of the apostles or rather, more truly, that of Christ himself, to whom the dignity of the apostolic name most applies. Let someone else hold the title of apostolic lord or apostolic legate;[985] the real meaning of the term and the dignity belong to everyone who, by virtue of the authority delegated to him,[986] proclaims Christ by interpreting Scripture. The person who does this is not simply a prophet but a prophet of the prophets, inasmuch as it is useless for the prophets to have written for us unless this kind of prophet exists to interpret them.[987] For it is truly a sealed

* * * * *

983 Matt 6:31–4

984 Acts 21:10–15; cf Acts 5:40–1.

985 Chomarat believes that Erasmus must have had Girolamo Aleandro (1480–1542) in mind when he wrote this; Erasmus pointedly exalts the humble preacher far above someone who bears the title 'apostolic.' Erasmus had encouraged Aleandro in Greek and humanistic studies; Aleandro later became rector of the University of Paris and was chosen by Leo X as envoy to Martin Luther to present the bull of excommunication (*Exsurge domine*), at which point Erasmus refused to side with Aleandro and the pope and turned down all invitations to dine with Aleandro. See Schoeck (1) 225–7. See also CEBR 'Aleandro, Girolamo' I 28–32.

986 Of crucial importance is the belief that only the bishop can delegate this authority to preach; it is not an authority one assumes on one's own, as was often the practice in the years before and during the Reformation. See the Fifth Lateran Council, Session 11 (19 December 1516) *Circa modum praedicandi* in Tanner I 634–8; and McGinness *Right Thinking* 33–4.

987 Again Erasmus makes this crucial distinction between prophets of the Old and New Testaments, for the latter can interpret the meaning of the prophecies (Scripture interpreting itself), whereas the prophets of the Old Testament did not know the true spiritual term and significances of their utterances as the

book that is understood neither by a man who is literate in the worldly sense because it is sealed nor by an ordinary man because he is illiterate. It was Jesus Christ who held first place in this order, who beginning from Moses and the prophets opened the Scriptures to his disciples;[988] and so their hearts, which were previously cold to the words of the prophets, were set on fire.

There are moreover two kinds of prophecy in the Old Law, the spoken and the unspoken. Types and figures belong to unspoken prophecy,[989] predictions about Christ to spoken. The Lord explains an unspoken prophecy in the Gospel when he says, 'Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up';[990] likewise, 'Just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth.'[991] More frequently he was occupied with the other kind, in general when he says, 'If you believed Moses, you would likewise believe me as well, for he wrote about me,'[992] specifically when he secretly shows the scribes and Pharisees that the prediction of the Psalm, 'The Lord said to my Lord,'[993] applies not to Solomon but to himself; again when, after reading in the temple the passage of prophetic Scripture that is in Isaiah chapter 61, he adds, 'Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your ears.'[994] He showed that the manna that flowed down for the Hebrews in the desert had been a type of the heavenly teaching that he brought to earth from the bosom of his Father,[995] or is his own body and blood with which we are restored in the Eucharist;[996] finally, reciting Psalm 21 on the cross, he shows that the very events that were then taking place had been predicted in it.[997] Similarly, the evangelists also show many predictions advanced about Christ, such as when John shows that what was written in Exodus about the paschal lamb was foretold of Christ,

* * * * *

full revelation of Christ had not yet come. See *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* (14:1–3) ASD VI-8 266–8.

988 Luke 24:27

989 On 'types and figures' see de Lubac *Medieval Exegesis* I 225–67, II passim; Raymond E. Brown 'Hermeneutics' JBC II 605–21, especially 611–13. See book 3 CWE 68 896, 952–3.

990 John 3:14

991 Matt 12:40

992 John 5:46

993 Ps 110:1 (Vulg 109:1), which Jesus cites in Matt 22:41–6; Mark 12:35–7; Luke 20:41–4.

994 Isa 61:1–2

995 John 6:31–5

996 John 6:56–9

997 Matt 27:46; Psalm 22 (Vulg 21)

such as, 'You will not break a bone of him';[998] but it is not appropriate to pursue this here. In either kind of prophecy no one explained more allegories than St Paul, such as when he fits to the Old Testament and the New the story about Hagar the maidservant cast out with her son and about Sarah's son Isaac, likewise about Mount Sinai and Zion;[999] he teaches that the rock from which the water flowed in the desert for the thirsting Hebrews was a figure of Christ.[1000] Peter shows in a sermon that the prophecy, 'You will not give your holy one to see corruption,' does not apply at all to David, who was corrupted in the tomb like other men, but to Christ, who rose with his body whole;[1001] he also indicates that the Flood was a type of baptism, the ark of the believing church.[1002] Indeed Paul shows that Christ's entire life is crowded with mystical types, expounding what it is to die with him,[1003] to be buried with him,[1004] to rise again, to ascend into heaven.[1005]

Preacher, you now know the dignity of your office, you now know its burden and its reward; what remains is to have always ringing in your ears the words that Paul bids be relayed to Archippus, 'See that you fulfil the ministry that you have received from the Lord.'[1006] Nothing is more honourable than a faithful prophet, nothing more detestable than a pseudoprophet, nothing more precious in the eyes of God than sincere evangelists, nothing more abominable than pseudevangelists.[1007] If you acknowledge its dignity, take care to glorify the office you have undertaken; if you recognize its difficulty, cast off sloth and be vigilant; if you understand its danger, beware of swerving to the right or to the left;[1008] if you consider its reward, let no difficulty deter you. Wherever you turn your eyes, there is something to stimulate your concern. If you look upward, you see who it is that has delegated that office to you, you see the reward that awaits; if you look about at what surrounds you, you see the sheep of Christ entrusted to your good faith; if you cast your eyes downward, you see the horrible vengeance for mishandling your office; if you penetrate into yourself, you recognize how

* * * * *

998 John 19:36; Exod 12:46
999 Gal 4:22–6
1000 1 Cor 10:4; Exod 17:6; Num 20:11
1001 Acts 2:27, 29–31; Ps 16:10 (Vulg 15:10)
1002 1 Pet 3:20–1; Genesis 7–8
1003 2 Cor 7:3; Col 2:20
1004 Col 2:12
1005 Rom 10:6–13
1006 Col 4:17; cf Philem 2.
1007 Cf 2 Cor 11:13–15.
1008 Cf Deut 17:11.

much purity of soul, how much learning, how much judgment, how much ardent charity, how much courage this office demands: if you know that you are not prepared, either keep away from it or else acquire what you need.

If a man has decided to enter an Olympic competition, what does he not do and endure in order to win the prize? With what care does he prepare everything? And yet what is all that but play, just as the rewards too are playthings – the applause of the stupid mob, the oaken crown that more likely points to a fool than an intelligent or a brave man? Though we are so careful in trivial matters, does someone yet dare to approach the office of preacher with no more training than a farmer at the lyre, a sailor at the plow? And, instead of the many outstanding virtues that the dignity of the office demands, does he bring nothing but exceptional shamelessness and impudence, taking no account of what rewards await the victor, what punishment the vanquished? It is a small thing to be hissed off the stage by a single crowd, but to be hooted off by the whole company of holy angels and pious souls is the height of misery. So let those who undertake this contest heed the Apostle when he urges, 'Run so that you may gain the prize,'[1009] so that they can boast along with him, 'I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; now the crown of righteousness has been laid up for me.'[1010]

Now, if it is sufficiently agreed that the dignity of the priest, if compared with any kind of mortal honour, is greater by many parasangs,[1011] as the saying goes, and is in some respect superior to the very angels, it remains for us to compare the priest with himself in order to clarify in what part of himself he is greatest. The principal offices of priests, that is, of bishops,[1012] are five: they administer the sacraments of the New Law, they pray for the people, they judge, they ordain, and they teach. There is none of these that does not surpass the excellence of kings. For no sacrament is conferred except through priests, apart from baptism, which in fact is not repeated when duly conferred by a lay person;[1013] but though it is

* * * * *

1009 1 Cor 9:24

1010 2 Tim 4:7–8

1011 See *Adagia* II iii 82 *Multis parasangis praecurrere* 'To be many parasangs ahead.' Erasmus explains that 'parasang' is the Persian name for a distance of thirty stadia (one *stadion* = 606.75 English feet) and is applied to 'a man who is a long way in front of the rest and is in many respects superior.' See LSJ 1631.

1012 The fullness of the priesthood is the bishop who alone can carry out all five duties Erasmus enumerates here (the power of ordination, for example, belongs exclusively to one already invested with the office of bishop).

1013 Anyone may baptize another in extreme circumstances (*in causa autem necessitatis*) as long as it is done according to the form of the church and the person

not annulled, only necessity excuses doing this – an excuse that does not apply to other sacraments. Moreover, baptism seems to have been introduced to replace circumcision, but circumcision required neither a priest nor a Levite. But in the past the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of hands to someone sprinkled with sacramental water;[1014] this was reserved to bishops alone. Then, with the advance of time,[1015] the body and blood of the Lord was given even to baptized infants, and this required the mouth and hands of the priest. In place of animal victims[1016] and other ceremonies, more spiritual sacraments were introduced: baptism, the Eucharist, confirmation, penitence, and extreme unction.[1017] Moreover, none of these is done without praying, but praying is common to both the priests of the New Law and the sacrificers of the Old Testament. For when a fire was raging against the people because of God's anger, Aaron took the thurible, stood midway between the dead and the living, and by his intervention turned the Lord's fury to mercy.[1018] The priest prays for a woman who has borne a child, and she is cleansed;[1019] he prays for a house contaminated by the stain of leprosy, and it is purified;[1020] he prays for the sins of those sacrificing, and their sins are remitted.[1021] In addition, he judges between case and case, between leprosy and

* * * * *

baptizing intends by it what the church does; see DS 1314 (Council of Florence 1439).

1014 Acts 8:14–18

1015 See Erasmus *Apologia adversus monachos* LB IX 1066B where he refers to Augustine's *Sermo* 174.7 WSA III-5 261: 'They are infants, but they share in his table, in order to have life in themselves'; and *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum* PL 44 (1865) 576 (*Answer to the Two Letters of the Pelagians*) WSA I-24 146: 'You see, Pope Innocent of blessed memory says that little ones do not have eternal life without Christ's baptism and without partaking of the body and blood of Christ.' See Chomarat ASD V-4 201 242n.

1016 See Leviticus 1–7, 23; Numbers 28–9.

1017 Erasmus does not mention ordination and marriage, but he strongly implies that ordination is a sacrament; see 402 and book 4 CWE 68 1056 n210. Although the Council of Florence affirmed marriage as the seventh of the seven sacraments (DS 1327), Erasmus' position on marriage as a sacrament is problematic, as is 'his attack on the indissolubility of marriage, which was what gave matrimony its sacramental quality in the eyes of Augustine'; see *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 203–438, especially 'Introductory Note' 205–6, 212.

1018 In Num 16:35 it is Eleazar who 'took the thurible . . .'; in a similar event at Num 16:46–50 it is Aaron who does the same, so causing God's wrath to cease.

1019 Lev 12:6–8

1020 Lev 14:34–57

1021 Lev 19:20–2

nonleprosy,[1022] between clean and unclean;[1023] and if any more serious controversy occurred, they are ordered to go to a priest, who is to end the disagreement with his judgment.[1024] Now, if a difficult question should arise – whether it is right to undertake a war or not, whether a marriage is valid or not, whether this or that is permitted to a prince and magistrate or not – where should one go but to a priest trained in the law of the Lord? It would be expedient for the conflicts of kings and the quarrels of spouses to be settled through them and for those involved in an acrimonious conflict to be reconciled through them. If that happened, there would be no need of so many soldiers for war, there would be no need of so many lawyers and advocates for settling disputes, and there would not be such complaining about corrupt judgments. The Hebrews lived in the greatest tranquillity for forty years under Samuel as judge and prophet.[1025] But the holier are the mysteries of the New Law and the more abundant its grace, so much greater is the dignity of the person who administers them; likewise, the greater the things that are sought and the firmer the confidence in receiving them through Christ, the greater is the authority of the person who intercedes. Again, the fuller the knowledge we now possess of the Lord's law, the more splendid is the office of judging. Add to this that the more sublime is the office of preaching, the more excellent is the power of ordaining,[1026] especially when the ability to confer the gift of the Spirit through the sacrament has been added. The people create a magistrate, the king creates a governor, but neither the one nor the other bestows the strength to carry out the office correctly. Therefore, since in what we have hitherto related the priest of the New Law far surpasses both the rank of the Mosaic priests, which was nonetheless held in high esteem in those days, and the excellence of kings, he greatly surpasses himself in this final function, which consists in teaching the Lord's flock.[1027] The word 'teaching' embraces both

* * * * *

1022 Deuteronomy 13

1023 Lev 14:57, 11:47; Ezek 44:23; cf Matt 8:1–4; Mark 1:40–4; Luke 5:12–14.

1024 Deut 17:8–11; Ezek 44:24

1025 See 1 & 2 Samuel.

1026 Erasmus implies that ordination is a sacrament, for it is an outward sign of an invisible grace; here (below) the grace given 'bestows the strength to carry it [ie the office] out correctly.'

1027 Erasmus notes that it is in 'teaching the Lord's flock' that the *ecclesiastes* surpasses the excellence of kings, and 'to fulfil the office of teaching is both the most difficult by far and also the most beautiful by far ...' (below). In this 'supreme office of teaching' he has his 'greatest dignity.' 'Teaching' has a specific content and definition, as Erasmus goes on to note; see 2 Tim 3:16: 'All

sound doctrine and the admonition, rebuke, consolation, and refutation of those who carp at the truth of the gospel.[1028] A lay person baptizes too; the congregation prays in turn for the priest; the administration of the other sacraments is not difficult; but to fulfil the office of teaching is both the most difficult by far and also the most beautiful by far, since its effectiveness is the most far-reaching. The priest is not always baptizing, not always anointing or absolving, but the office of teaching, without which the others are useless, is continuous. For what good is it to adults to have been baptized unless they have been taught through a catechist what baptism means, what they ought to believe, how they ought to order their life according to their Christian faith? What good is receiving the Lord's body and blood unless they have learned how this sacrament was instituted, what it effects in us, the faith and purity with which it should be received? Lest I become too wordy by naming every one, a similar opinion should be held about the rest. Therefore, just as an actor, though he strives to please the crowd in each scene of a play, applies all the art he has in the final act, so the Christian preacher, though he ought to apply great care to please the Lord in his other functions, should surpass himself in this supreme office of teaching. The offices of kings are numerous and splendid, though they are all inferior to the priestly office, but kings are never occupied in a more kingly duty than when they speak before an assembly and urge peace, settle sedition, exhort to obedience of the laws, or sit before tribunals and hear cases and render a fair judgment to the people; even so the prelate, though outstanding in everything, is absolutely at the peak of his dignity when he feeds the Lord's flock with sacred teaching from the pulpit and dispenses to them the treasure of evangelical philosophy.[1029]

All the more deplorable is the perverse judgment of some who relegate the right of ordaining to certain factitious and venal bishops,[1030] entrust the power of baptizing and absolving to the untried, and grant authority to consecrate the Lord's body and blood to people they sometimes would not

* * * * *

Scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every good work.' See also 2 Tim 4:2. See the introduction 172–5.

1028 See 2 Tim 3:16.

1029 Erasmus states his thesis most affirmatively here: teaching is the apex of the bishop's office; it is in this that he most fulfils the ministry of Christ the teacher. Trent's decrees on preaching will echo this clearly; see Tanner II 669 and 763–4.

1030 Erasmus refers here to the practice of creating stipendary bishops, ie bishops consecrated to assume the duties of absentee or nonfunctioning diocesan bishops in exchange for fees.

deem worthy of sharing their own table or conversation. The most excellent duty of all, teaching, they sometimes toss to the least respected priests and monks, the sort to which perhaps they would be unwilling to entrust the care of their stable or kitchen (I am not criticizing monasticism or the priesthood but the foolish choice). Meanwhile, what part of the priestly dignity do they keep for themselves? They take charge of cavalry, occupy fortresses, keep bodyguards, supervise accounts, serve monarchs, and only in this way regard themselves as outstanding prelates. But though these things do not deserve rebuke, yet they should be entrusted instead to the lowliest servants, being unworthy to be delegated even to subdeacons; they are ashamed of what is most honourable, glory in what is meanest.

Foolish judgments,[1031] not only here but in pretty much every part of life, are the springs from which gushes all moral decay. How rare is the man who does not value more highly the external goods that are attributed to luck than those of the body![1032] What do men not endure to turn out rich, to win the honours of this world! They sail, travel, wage war; there is no kind of danger that they do not scorn. But are those who do not value the gifts of the body above those of the mind, the temporary above the eternal, any fewer in number? Could you find anyone who does not fear a mortal prince more than God? Who does not value a relation or a friend according to the flesh[1033] more than Christ? What other reason is there except that we are of flesh and therefore come nearer the nature of animals, which are ruled by their feelings, than that of the angels and recognize neither the dignity of our condition nor the loftiness of the office undertaken?

An ancient and profane oracle advises that each man should know himself.[1034] Once King Philip of Macedon,[1035] otherwise an intelligent man, ran dancing through the midst of his army when quite drunk himself, together

* * * * *

1031 Erasmus' best illustration of this thesis that foolish judgments 'in pretty much every part of life' lead to moral decay is *Moria* CWE 27 77–153.

1032 'Luck' (*fortuna*); Diogenes Laertius identifies some of the benefits: 'wealth, good birth, reputation and the like'; see *Vitae philosophorum* 5.1.30, where he attributes to Aristotle the ranking of 'goods': 'in the highest order are the goods of the soul, then goods of the body, then external goods' (ie 'attributed to luck'). See also Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 5.8.24, 25, where he attributes this ranking to Theophrastus.

1033 Cf 2 Cor 11:18; Phil 3:3–7; Gal 6:12; 2 Cor 5:16; John 8:15.

1034 The Greek oracle at Delphi. For the oracle's words 'know yourself' (γνῶθι σεαυτόν; *nosce teipsum*), see *Adagia* I vi 95.

1035 Philip of Macedon (King Philip II, ruled 359–36 BC), father of Alexander the Great.

with other inebriates, and was rebuked as follows by the Athenian orator Demades:[1036] 'What are you doing, king? Fortune has placed upon you the mask of Agamemnon, and you adopt the mask of Thersites.'[1037] The pagan king, warned by a man whom no one praised, reformed himself to a more virtuous state. If only priests would heed the voice of Christ, who threatens in the mystical Song, 'If you do not know yourself, O beautiful among women, go out and follow the tracks of your flocks.'[1038] Regard this as having been spoken to the soul of the pastor who, though he professes himself a leader of churches, forgets the task he has undertaken and lowers himself to gain, to idleness, to pleasures. So, it appears, he is commanded to change his course, and since instead of leading his flock he is leading it astray, he has to walk behind the tracks of the flocks so that he may become a pupil instead of a teacher and learn to obey before he commands. This self-ignorance causes a man, though he is close to an angel in status, to be compared to 'the witless beasts'[1039] and to become 'like them'; it causes him to delegate to the lowest what is highest in his ministry, to reserve for himself as highest what is lowest. Tell me, whoever you are, distinguished with your holy mitre, while you listen to confessions, while you console the suffering, are you ashamed to serve your prince Christ by serving his members[1040] and not ashamed to serve a mortal prince in the business of his palace, not to say his war camp? Do you consider yourself demeaned if you teach the people the way of the Lord[1041] from the pulpit and take pride in riding armed among soldiers – I almost said scoundrels?

In Holy Writ humility was praised,[1042] pride condemned;[1043] but there is a kind of humility than which nothing is more detestable, and there is also a kind of pride than which nothing is more laudable.[1044] Humble in the

* * * * *

1036 See *Apophthegmata* CWE 38 702. The anecdote is from Diodorus Siculus *Bibliotheca historica* 16.87.1–3.

1037 See 327 n570 above.

1038 Song of Sol 1:7. Cf Origen *The Song of Songs: Commentary and Homilies* trans R.P. Lawson ACW 26 128–39; *Commentarium in Cantica Canticorum* to 2:15 trans Rufinus of Aquileia, ed W.A. Baehrens *Origines Werke* VIII GCS 33 (1925); *Homiliae in Cantica Canticorum* to 2:14 trans St Jerome, ed W.A. Baehrens *Origines Werke* VIII GCS 33 (1925) 26–60.

1039 Ps 49:12 (Vulg 48:13)

1040 1 Cor 6:15; Eph 5:30

1041 Matt 22:16; Luke 20:21

1042 Prov 11:2; Col 3:12; 1 Pet 5:5; Luke 1:48

1043 Prov 11:2

1044 Erasmus contrasts a wrong kind of humility with the right kind of pride, using the parable of the prodigal son and the words of St Paul. In the first case the

wrong way was the prodigal son who left the house of a wealthy and kindly father and became the swineherd of a foreigner,[1045] once a citizen now an exile, once a free man now a servant, feeding upon the husks thrown to pigs instead of delicacies; but he happily regained his self-esteem after he began to recognize his worth: 'How many hired men there are in my father's house who have bread aplenty, and here I die of hunger.'[1046] On the other hand, there is a certain laudable pride that makes a man conscious of the dignity to which he has been raised through God's mercy and judge it unworthy of himself to sink into dishonourable behaviour, so as to become the servant of Satan though adopted into the company of the children of God,[1047] to stain himself with vice though purified in the sacred font, to hunt after worldly comforts though called to a heavenly reward. This pride especially befits a priest and preacher, for others, I think, scarcely deserve this claim to distinction. Hear in Paul an example of the common kind of pride (for he is not speaking there in his own person): 'Shall I take the limbs of Christ and make them the limbs of a harlot?'[1048] But again hear the voice of the proud teacher: 'It is better for me to die than to empty out my glory, which I have in the gospel of Christ.'[1049] He does not glory in palaces, wealth, attendants, horsemen, but grows proud because he had illuminated the gospel by his labours and trials, because he carried about Christ's

* * * * *

worldly young man who has debased himself as the lowliest of servants in a far-off land comes to his senses in recognizing the lost status he once enjoyed in the house of his father and seeks to regain it; so, rising from his humble station, he sets out to return to his father by begging forgiveness and hoping for an amelioration of his impoverished condition. Erasmus sees this as a 'detestable' example of humility and contrasts it with Paul, who so mightily values the exalted status of the preaching ministry entrusted to him that he would never consent to allow it to be diminished in any way through any failing on his part. Paul exemplifies good pride; he is humbly aware of the extraordinary gift he, though altogether unworthy, has received from God and his obligation to carry out the Lord's mission faithfully. See also Erasmus' interpretation of this passage in *De libero arbitrio* CWE 76 72, where he gives the prodigal son's repentance as an example of the working of 'prevenient grace.' See also *Paraphrasis in Lucam* (15:11–32) CWE 48 74–88 and accompanying footnotes.

1045 Luke 15:11–32

1046 Luke 15:17

1047 Rom 8:15

1048 1 Cor 6:15. Paul follows up his rhetorical question in this passage with 'God forbid!' 'Pray God, may such a thing never happen!' (*Id quidem avertat Deus*). See *Paraphrasis in 1 ad Corinthios* LB VII 877 C / CWE 43 83.

1049 1 Cor 9:15

triumph[1050] in every place. Therefore, he forgets those things that are behind and hastens on towards those that lie ahead in order to seize the crown,[1051] so far is he from degenerating to lower levels. Now, how great is the shame if someone who was a physician becomes a surgeon or a pharmacist, or someone who was a courtier becomes a farmer, or if someone who was the steward of a powerful man becomes a common cook! Anyone driven to such a fate would want to hang himself, so great is the pride we take in things of little consequence, so great the nobility of soul, while great indeed is our humility and dejection in matters that are of the highest importance. Christ should be especially implored that all bishops recognize their worth so that they imitate the pride of the apostles. Surely you, pastor, to whom a bishop has delegated the responsibility of tending the flock in his place, you, preacher, to whom the office of teaching the people has been entrusted, recognize the dignity of your position, recognize that what is greatest and fairest in all the functions of a bishop has been channelled into you. Take pride, then, take a pride worthy of your office, and believe that you should be deeply ashamed if you are a slave to gain, to luxury, to shameful pleasures, to the other vices of the common herd; but honour your ministry,[1052] mindful of whose sheep you have undertaken to tend,[1053] whose treasures you dispense,[1054] to whom you will soon render an account of the conduct of your duty, what rewards await the faithful steward, what punishments the faithless.[1055]

How could anyone who reflects upon this be free from worry? If someone is unaware of it, what is more stupid than he? If someone understands but ignores it, what is more pitiable than he? Let consideration of the worth of your function[1056] raise your mind from earthbound cares; let the severity

* * * * *

1050 2 Cor 2:14
1051 Phil 3:13–14
1052 Rom 11:13
1053 Cf John 21:17.
1054 2 Cor 4:7; Matt 13:44; Luke 12:42
1055 Cf Matt 25:14–30; Luke 19:11–27.
1056 The unanimous reading of the sources here, *consideratae functionis dignitas*, presents a difficulty that Chomarat resolves by taking *consideratae* in the non-classical sense 'en vue,' 'qui attire les regards'; ASD V-4 207 383n. This is certainly possible; but if *consideratae* is not simply a slip for *considerata*, it is also possible that it is a feminine plural form intended to modify each of the nouns in the series, all of them feminine (*dignitas, severitas, difficultas, magnitudo*). Erasmus' point would be: 'Let consideration of the dignity, etc and consideration of the severity, etc and consideration of the difficulty, etc and consideration of the magnitude, etc' have the specified effects rather than the dignity, the

of the one who commissions you deter you from prevarication; let the difficulty of the office undertaken exclude sloth; let the magnitude of the reward, which will have to be expected not from men but from God, rouse your industry and vigilance: it is for him you serve as a soldier, he will pay you an everlasting wage. Do not say, 'What? Am I to serve the people without pay?' You do not serve the people, good fellow, but serve Christ in the people; and lest you scorn any of the common folk, all are members of Christ;[1057] or if any are not that yet, your purpose is to make them that.

Imagine that what the Lord commands through Isaiah was said to you by name: 'Get up upon a high mountain, you who bring good tidings to Zion; lift up your voice in strength, you who bring good tidings to Jerusalem.'[1058] A magnificent mission has been entrusted to you, an argument difficult to make convincingly to those who love the world. What is it? 'All flesh is grass, all its glory like the flower of the grass.'[1059] What is left then but for us to cast off the flesh and turn into spirit? Let our grass wither at the rising of the sun, which illuminates every man coming into this world;[1060] let our flower fall before the shining glory of the gospel, for there follows, 'But the word of the Lord remains forever.'[1061] The preaching of this word has been entrusted to you; do not speak humbly, do not creep upon the ground, but speak lofty things from aloft. Zion embodies a type of the church,[1062] inasmuch as it is itself the mountain supporting the temple of God, which is the church. He who brings good tidings to this is commanded to rise onto another higher mountain; thus the Lord, when he was about to teach those lofty things, ascended a mountain and sat.[1063]

* * * * *

severity, the difficulty, and the magnitude themselves. The clash between the plural adjective and the singular verb is awkward but perhaps not impossible. (J. Butrica)

1057 1 Cor 6:15, 12:27; Eph 5:30

1058 Isa 40:9

1059 Isa 40:6

1060 John 1:9. Erasmus substitutes the word 'sun' (*sol*) for the word 'light' (*lux* and *lumen*). 'Sun' recalls Plato's *Republic* 6.507D–508E: it is the metaphor for the 'reality ... that gives their truth to the objects of knowledge and the power of knowing to the knower ... the idea of good ... the cause of knowledge, and of truth in so far as known' (508E).

1061 Isa 40:8; 1 Pet 1:25

1062 Cf Gal 4:22–6.

1063 Matt 5:1; see Erasmus *Paraphrasis in Mattheum* CWE 45 83: 'And so when he reached the top of the hill Jesus sat down, not out of weariness, but because he was about to teach difficult and serious things that required an attentive listener.'

The mountain shows the heroic strengths in the evangelist, the sitting his constancy and his heart untroubled by any confusion of carnal desires. On Zion we gaze at the heavenly; in Jerusalem is the vision of peace.[1064] Therefore, you, whoever you are, who teach love for the good things of heaven and scorn for the things of earth, who announce good news, who preach the peace that passes all understanding, ascend the mountain,[1065] shout[1066] from it. The word 'shout' here does not indicate a straining of the voice but the fire of emotion and the urgency of preaching. 'There is no peace for the wicked,' shouts prophecy.[1067] Whoever teaches piety is summoning us towards peace. There is a great serenity in having God's favour, a great joy always in having before one's eyes that heavenly peace that neither the malice of the wicked nor the envy of Satan nor any iniquity can disturb. This is that heavenly church of all the saints,[1068] which is built as a city[1069] that is compact together. That peace is seen here too, but from afar, partially and in a riddle;[1070] there it will be seen perfect and present. The church militant is a city placed upon a mountain,[1071] as the word of the gospel has it; the evangelical philosophy that he who came from heaven[1072] brought is sublime, and just as he, according to the Baptist, is over all, so he speaks heavenly things. And so how will it be possible for a man to preach the sublime to the sublime if he himself is sunk in the muck of pleasures, somnolence, luxury, and greed? Go up, therefore, upon the mountain, evangelist, whoever you are, not with your feet but with your emotions; for to ascend to a rank of dignity and not ascend to lofty virtues is more truly a descent than an ascent. But what follows, 'As a shepherd feeds his flock,'[1073] shows abundantly that this passage of prophecy pertains to pastors.

In chapter 52 the same prophet saw such evangelists with prophetic eyes, saying, 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who announces and proclaims peace, of him who announces the good news, proclaims salvation.'[1074] What are 'lovely feet'? Emotions free of the desire for

* * * * *

1064 See Revelation 21.
1065 Isa 40:9
1066 Isa 40:6–9
1067 Isa 48:22, 57:21
1068 Ps 149:1 (Vulg 149:1); cf Ecclus 31:11, 44:15.
1069 Ps 122:3 (Vulg 121:3)
1070 Cf 1 Cor 13:12.
1071 Matt 5:14
1072 John 3:31; see Erasmus *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 52.
1073 Isa 40:11
1074 Isa 52:7

what is base. What are 'feet upon the mountains'? What else but residence in heaven[1075] and a mind that knows what is above and seeks what is above. What does that repetition mean, 'announcing, announcing' and 'proclaiming peace, good news, and salvation'? What else but insistence and constancy in the business of the gospel, which Paul wants to be announced in season and out of season.[1076] We announce the new, we publish what is public; the voice of one who announces new and joyful things earns applause, the voice of the herald penetrates to everyone's ears. The voice of the synagogue was thin; it barely sounded throughout a single region, while it has been said of the heralds of the gospel that 'their sound has gone out into every land and their words to the ends of the earth.'[1077] The Law was given to a single people; Christ's grace is extended to all the nations of the world.[1078] The herald of the gospel is told, 'Shout; do not cease; be not afraid,'[1079] and again in chapter 58, 'Shout; do not cease; lift up your voice like a trumpet.'[1080] At the music from this sort of trumpet fell the walls of Jericho,[1081] a word that in Hebrew means 'moon.'[1082] The moon is near the earth, wandering and changeable like those who are stuck to the lowly and the unstable, but lunatic desires of this sort collapse at the music of the priestly trumpets. Sacred are those who play, sacred are the trumpets, which were used at the Jubilee, as you read at Joshua 6.[1083] Freedom of the spirit follows the destruction of the earthly emotions that reduce us to slavery. These trumpets do not sound the secular, the lowly, and the lunatic, but that lofty sun of righteousness,[1084] Christ, who never changes; for, as Paul says, 'He is yesterday and today, the same for all time.'[1085] Victory is assured when the armed multitude shouts to the noise of the priestly trumpets.[1086] This happens whenever the voice of the preacher, thanks to the energy of the Spirit,[1087] penetrates into the hearts

* * * * *

1075 Cf Phil 3:20 *conversatio in caelis* and Col 3:1–2.
1076 2 Tim 4:2
1077 Ps 19:4 (Vulg 18:5); see Rom 10:18; Matt 28:19–20; Acts 1:8.
1078 Matt 28:19
1079 Chomarat notes that this line is not in Scripture. Erasmus constructs this by connecting Isa 40:6 and 9. See ASD V-4 210 439n.
1080 Isa 58:1
1081 Joshua 6
1082 Erasmus appears to have taken this reading from Augustine; see Augustine *Enarratio in Psalmum 60* CCSL 39 770 (*Exposition of Psalm 60*) WSA III-17 199.
1083 Josh 6:4
1084 Mal 4:2
1085 Heb 13:8
1086 Josh 6:5
1087 Cf Rom 15:13, 19; 1 Corinthians 12.

of his listeners, just as in St Paul the outsider who hears the prophet speaking in plain language falls upon his face and glorifies God,[1088] and in the Gospel the Jews, moved by the trumpet of John the Baptist, shout, 'What shall we do to be saved?';[1089] and in Acts, at Peter's first bugle (for we read that he raised his voice),[1090] they shout, cut to the heart, 'What shall we do, brethren?'[1091] and nearly three thousand men embraced the gospel.[1092]

But to return to the earlier passage of Isaiah. It says, 'The voice of your watchmen, they have raised their voice, they will praise together.'[1093] Whoever wishes to be considered a herald of the gospel should be in a watchtower[1094] so that he can keep watch from on high, not only for himself but for others too. Instead of 'watchmen' the Septuagint has 'guards,'[1095] that is, those who stand guard upon the walls of the church. Therefore remember, herald of the gospel, whoever you are, that according to the language of the prophet you must stand guard by day and by night,[1096] so that if a voice is heard from Seir, 'Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?,'[1097] you may have a ready answer. What is 'they will praise' or 'they will rejoice together'?[1098] It shows the harmony of the preachers in their teaching, which in these times, alas, we miss in many of them; we hear the cry of their exultation, but it is dissonant and discordant. What sound does the herald of the Law make? 'The soul that sins shall die,'[1099] and unless you abide by what is written in this book, all curses will befall you.[1100] The Mosaic herald announces laws and strikes terror with threats;

* * * * *

1088 1 Cor 14:24–5
1089 Luke 3:10
1090 Acts 2:14
1091 Acts 2:37
1092 Acts 2:14–41
1093 Isa 52:8
1094 Cf Isa 21:8. See *Paraphrasis in acta apostolorum* CWE 50 13. Erasmus explains that 'Mount Sion, which in Hebrew means "watchtower," from which all things earthly are looked down upon, all things heavenly are, through faith, observed as though nearby.'
1095 φυλασσόντων, Greek genitive plural
1096 Isa 62:6
1097 Isa 21:11. Seir, eponymous ancestor of the Edomites and the ancient name of Edom, designates the location of these gentiles in the mountains south, southeast of the Dead Sea; the name is also associated with Esau. See Gen 36:20–30 where Seir's genealogy is given.
1098 Cf Isa 65:14.
1099 Ezek 18:4
1100 Cf Deut 27:26; Gal 3:10.

what about the herald of the church? He announces to all nations living under whatever sky that remission of all sins has been secured through faith in Jesus Christ;[1101] with the angels he announces peace to men on earth,[1102] not through the works of the Law but through the free will and gratuitous kindness of God, who was in Christ reconciling the world to himself;[1103] he announces goodness instead of vengeance, salvation instead of the death that is due the sins of man. To whom are these things preached? To Zion, which is now the church scattered throughout the entire world, for so goes the prophecy, saying, 'Zion, your god will reign.'[1104] Where sin reigns, there is not the kingdom of God; where the flesh reigns, there the Spirit does not reign; where superstition reigns, there true devotion does not reign. And so the church prays daily, 'Thy kingdom come';[1105] if God reigns within us, we too reign with him in the freedom of the spirit.[1106] This reign was illuminated when the Spirit came upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost.[1107] The Law had been given on Mount Sinai on the same day;[1108] thunder was heard, lightning was seen, all shuddered at the smoking mountain[1109] and at Moses' face, which all but flashed,[1110] but upon no one did that Spirit descend that forgives sins freely through faith,[1111] conferring righteousness[1112] and liberty.[1113]

That each prophecy in fact speaks of grace made through Christ is shown in the fact that one professes, 'The Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem; the Lord has prepared his holy arm in the eyes of all nations and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God,'[1114] and the other begins, 'Be comforted, be comforted, my people; speak to the heart of Jerusalem.'[1115] 'It is with the heart that one believes

* * * * *

1101 Acts 13:38
1102 Luke 2:13–14
1103 2 Cor 5:17–21; Eph 2:16; Col 1:20
1104 Isa 52:7
1105 Matt 6:10; Luke 11:2
1106 Cf Rom 8:21; 2 Cor 3:17.
1107 Acts 2:1–4
1108 Erasmus develops this figurative interpretation in *Paraphrasis in acta apostolorum* CWE 50 13, 23; see 168 n1 and 179 n111.
1109 Exod 19:16, 18
1110 Exod 34:29–30
1111 Matt 9:2
1112 Rom 3:22
1113 2 Cor 3:17
1114 Isa 52:9–10
1115 Isa 40:1–2

in righteousness,'[1116] which promises salvation through faith in Christ and speaks to the heart because it speaks of the things of the spirit. Moreover, no one can speak to the heart of the people unless he speaks from the heart;[1117] but the Law, which demanded works from the Jews, frightened those who did not provide them[1118] and did not add grace: it spoke not to the heart but only to the ears of the body. But after the prophecy that we cited in the first passage there follows an obvious prediction about Christ: 'He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and we have been healed by his bruising. All we like sheep have gone astray, everyone has turned to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.'[1119] Different passages of Scripture apply to different persons, with some instruction for husbands,[1120] some also for wives,[1121] some for virgins,[1122] some for commoners,[1123] some for kings,[1124] some for priests;[1125] this proclamation pertains to everyone, and no man has any hope of salvation unless it reaches his heart.

In the same prophet the watchman is also instructed to announce whatever he sees.[1126] What does a secular watchman announce? From the tower he sees cavalry or a fleet in the distance; immediately he gives the signal with a bell so that danger does not overwhelm without warning. It is therefore the duty of the good pastor to see far off, to see through darkness, to train his eyes in every direction, so that he not only remedies present ills but rushes to forestall the dangers that threaten trouble from afar: schisms, heresies, wars, paganism, Judaism.[1127] Whoever guesses wisely about the future

* * * * *

1116 Rom 10:10
1117 Matt 12:34; Luke 6:45
1118 See eg Exod 22:20, 31:13–15, 35:2; Num 18:3; Deut 21:21; Lev 20:13–14.
1119 Isa 53:5–6
1120 Matt 5:32; Col 3:19
1121 1 Cor 7:39–40; Col 3:18; 1 Pet 3:1
1122 1 Cor 7:1, 8, 25–38; 7:32–4; see also 1 Cor 7:36–8.
1123 Rom 13:1–7; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13–14; Heb 13:17
1124 Rom 13:4
1125 1 Tim 3:2–3; Titus 1:7–9
1126 Isa 21:6
1127 Erasmus calls attention to the duty of pastors to protect their flock against all manner of false doctrine that would adulterate the 'heavenly philosophy' and so lure the faithful away from Christ. Again his central point is that the heavenly teaching (safe, pure, and solid doctrine) is constantly endangered by all manner of pseudoprophets. If Christ's teaching is perverted, that is, by killing him in human minds, the consequence to the Christian who willingly

has the eyes of a prophet, and whatever evil befalls will be accounted to his silence if he does not give the signal clearly to the sleepers with his ringing. It is punishable by death if someone who keeps watch in the tower either has not seen or has not told in advance of an approaching enemy; but no enemies are more dangerous than the deadly vices, which destroy souls and which kill Christ in his members. What penalty, therefore, awaits a watchman if he has been silent?[1128] A dull-witted watchman sees someone plotting treachery and is condemned if he does not denounce him in time; and do you see Satan digging tunnels and keep silent? The most vigilant watchman was Habakkuk, who said, 'I will stand upon my guard and fix my step upon the fortification, and I will watch in order to see what will be said to me and what I may answer to the one who accuses me.'[1129] The prophecy that is in Isaiah also addresses preachers: 'Upon your walls I have set guards, all the day and all the night perpetually they will not be silent. You who remember the Lord, do not keep quiet and do not give him silence.'[1130] Preacher, do you hear? You should be on the walls, not in the taverns, if you want to perform your duty, nor is it right for you to keep quiet at any time, neither by night nor by day. For danger threatens God's people on either side: in adversity they are tempted through affliction to blasphemy, despair, and desertion from God, and in prosperity they are enticed through the blandishments of the flesh to forgetfulness of God. Or understand the night as when Satan openly tempts to drunkenness, luxury, adultery, and whoring, which are the works of night and of darkness,[1131] the day as when the midday demon[1132] lays its snare under the mask of religion and piety; the guardian of Jerusalem must be absolutely alert in either case.

Nor must anyone be heeded who replies, 'All this squares with the prophets of the first kind who foretold the coming of the Redeemer; what need for such shouting now, when it is agreed that he has already come?' No, Christ has not yet come for all. He has not yet come for the Jews, who are still awaiting their Messiah; he has not come for those who do not believe

* * * * *

follows the false prophet is the loss of his immortal soul. More detail about some of these dangers appears below.

1128 Ezek 33:6
1129 Hab 2:1
1130 Isa 62:6–7
1131 Rom 13:12–13
1132 Ps 91:6 (Vulg 90:6)

that he redeemed the world by his death; he has not come for those who imagine him other than as he is, such as the Arians,[1133] the Eunomians,[1134] the Sabellians;[1135] finally, he has not yet come for those who profess him with their mouth but deny him with their acts. He has truly come only for those who live and are moved by his spirit and for all who can say with the Apostle, 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives within me.'[1136] Some cried out against those who announced Christ's coming, nor are there fewer now who resist his gospel. Some killed Christ when he was dwelling in the flesh; I only wish there were none now who more dangerously kill him in the minds of men![1137] Whoever draws a true believer into heretical error kills Christ; whoever has coaxed a simple girl to turn her zeal for modesty into lust has killed Christ in her. Accordingly, there is no less work and no less danger today than there was in the past for those who announce Christ sincerely. Christ is killed particularly through the tongue; through the tongue he is born and reborn in us: 'Base conversations corrupt good character.'[1138] He is born again in those who are regenerated by the word of life and whenever he is formed anew in the minds of men by learned correction. Even when the Lord wore a mortal body on earth, he was pierced and slain by tongues. Those who accused him before the priests,[1139] before

* * * * *

1133 Arians did not accept the eternal consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, and therefore denied his divinity; the heresy was condemned at the Council of Nicea (325); see DS 125, 126 (anathematizing the Arian position). See 'Arianism' ODCC 99–100.

1134 Eunomians, followers of Eunomius (d 394), took an even more extreme position than the Arians by holding that Christ was not of the divine substance but only a being immediately produced by the Father and in that way resembled him. Eunomius' teachings were condemned at the Council of Constantinople (381); see DS 150, which condemned the teaching of many types of 'Arianizers'; see 'Eunomius' ODCC 572–3.

1135 Sabellians, also known as Monarchians, believed in the oneness of the single monarchical godhead without distinctions of persons; the persons, rather, were different manifestations of God at various events or moments in various modes. Their condemnation came at Nicea and Constantinople. See ODCC 1434.

1136 Gal 2:20

1137 Erasmus speaks here of schismatics, heretics, and Jews who would deter someone from the teaching of Christ or corrupt the gospel with the result that one loses everlasting life.

1138 1 Cor 15:33. Paul cites Menander; see *Adagia* I x 74 *Corrumpunt mores bonos colloquia prava* 'Evil communications corrupt good manners.'

1139 Matt 26:60–2; Mark 14:55–9; Luke 22:66–71; John 18:12–14, 19–24

Pilate,[1140] those who shouted, 'Take and crucify him,'[1141] used tongues in place of sharp swords; whatever was done then at the level of human feeling is done daily at the spiritual level, and with greater danger as the spiritual is higher than the physical. Therefore, what Solomon said in Proverbs, 'Death and life are in the hands of the tongue,'[1142] applies especially to them. Some bear a poison in their tongue more effective than the venom of asps;[1143] but some, on the other hand, heal with the tongue those wounded by the tongue and with a healing tongue cure those infected by a pestilent tongue, as he also teaches: 'The tongue of the wise man is health.'[1144] It is attested even in pagan proverbs that 'speech is a physician to an ailing soul';[1145] likewise the Psalm goes, 'He sent forth his speech and healed them.'[1146] The great power of the human tongue is shown abundantly in ancient literature, and we see it every day as the tongue of a single man stirs to war an entire city or a whole region that was peaceful before or compels troops drawn up and thirsting for blood to lay down their arms, overthrows states by ruinous counsel and saves them, if it wishes, by wholesome counsel, arranges alliances of princes and puts asunder those arranged, strengthens the bonds of marriage and tears these bonds asunder. If the human tongue has such power, how much more potent is the force of the preacher's tongue, which is the instrument of the Holy Spirit. Truly death is in the hands of this tongue, as is life; it is life when it turns sinners towards penitence, it is death when it kills the old Adam in them along with his deeds.[1147] This of course is the treasure from which the wealthy householder brings forth new and old things,[1148] that is, he is instructed in the writings of both Testaments.

There are dogs that Paul detests and orders us to guard against, namely workers of iniquity;[1149] there are also praiseworthy dogs that by

* * * * *

1140 Matt 27:2–24; Mark 15:1–15; Luke 23:1–24; John 18:29–19:15
1141 John 19:15
1142 Prov 18:21
1143 Ps 140:3 (Vulg 139:4)
1144 Prov 12:18
1145 *Adagia* III i 100 *Animo aegrotanti medicus est oratio* 'To a sick spirit speech is a physician.' Erasmus imprecisely remembers the adage. In the text he gives it as *animae aegrotanti medicum esse sermonem*. He finds versions of this in Plutarch, Aeschylus, Horace, the Stoics, Terence, Isocrates, and in 'the Hebrew sage' (Prov 15:1).
1146 Ps 107:20 (Vulg 106:20)
1147 For 'Old Adam . . . deeds' cf Col 3:9–10.
1148 Matt 13:52
1149 Phil 3:2; see *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Philippenses* CWE 43 378.

their barking deter nocturnal thieves who try to break into the house, whence the Greeks call them οἰκουροί [*oikouroi*], that is, 'guards and watchers of the house,'[1150] not like the dog that the Psalm accuses, 'If you saw a thief, you ran with him.'[1151] Moreover, just as thieves are wont to silence dogs by tossing them some morsel,[1152] so those who love their own private gain more than the public gain of the Lord's flock toss money or a bishopric into their maw like a tidbit when preachers begin to bark, so that they are silent and betray God's house to the thieves. But the faithful watchman who stands upon the walls of Jerusalem must be silent neither by night nor by day,[1153] and he does not check his voice at the tossing of food as ill-bred dogs are wont to do and will not forego his heavenly reward for a piece of bread. Dogs of this kind are suited to hunting souls, for they know when they should change their voice and the tricks to drive a wild beast into the Lord's nets. Finally, this animal is said to have the power in its tongue to heal wounds;[1154] they lick out the gore and keep the wounded place from putrefying. The tongue of the good preacher should be such that no one departs from a talk with him without being cleaner; with gentle warnings and mild correction he should bring healing to good people who have fallen through weakness and with his faithful barking drive away the incurable. Lest anyone be offended by this designation, these dogs have great dignity in the eyes of God, for in the mystical writings those who are called dogs are also called gods;[1155] they are called prophets, as we have shown, and they are also called kings (if a majestic title appeals to anyone).

For it is clear that heralds of the gospel are the subject at Psalm 67, wherein we read, 'You will set aside a gracious rain, God, for your inheritance';[1156] this of course is the rain of heavenly teaching that makes our

* * * * *

1150 Οἰκουρός means 'watching' or 'keeping the house'; LSJ 1205. Cf Aristophanes *Wasps* 970: 'That other Cur is a mere stay-at-home.'

1151 Ps 50:18 (Vulg 49:18)

1152 See Seneca *De constantia* 2.14.2 and Virgil *Aeneid* 6.417–23.

1153 Isa 62:6; see also Isa 56:10 for Israel's watchmen who are like 'mute dogs.'

1154 Aelian *De natura animalium* 8.9

1155 See John 10:34 (citing Ps 82:6 [Vulg 81:6]). References to dogs in Scripture are commonly negative, and no passage suggests that 'dogs have great dignity in the eyes of God' (cf Tob 11:9 as a possible exception). Dogs were considered unclean animals who fed on carrion (cf Exod 22:31). But see Luke 16:21 where Erasmus says the dogs who lick Lazarus' wounds 'rebuked the inhumanity of the self-indulgent rich man, for they would come and lick Lazarus' sores'; see *Paraphrasis in Lucam 11–24* CWE 48 99 and n28.

1156 Ps 68:9 (Vulg 67:10)

land fertile. And there follows, 'The Lord will give the word to those who preach good tidings with great power.'[1157] These are the ones who sleep amidst unknown dangers,[1158] resting securely through faith in the writings of both Testaments,[1159] who have the silvered wings of the dove,[1160] namely evangelical innocence[1161] joined with purity of life and splendour of character,[1162] not without the pleasant ringing of salutary teaching that rings out not the sounds of earth but those of heaven. And although silver also shines if you work it properly and gives delight by its ringing tone, it is nonetheless liable to tarnish if you neglect it. If a preacher attends to the letter, his teaching takes on a tarnish; hence there follows, 'and his hinder parts covered in the paleness or the greenness of gold.'[1163] The letter is first, the mystical sense[1164] comes after; it is not corrupted but is green with perpetual authority. But from what author does all this come? Of course from the king of hosts of the beloved,[1165] the beloved who gives the word to those who bring good tidings with great power,[1166] from the king of hosts whom Paul calls the king of the ages.[1167] The Jews have the ringing of silver, but spoiled by much tarnish; comparing the spiritual with the spiritual, we have gold. The perfect evangelist was the Lord Jesus; the Father loved him uniquely[1168] as his only begotten.[1169] What is carnal is first, then what is spiritual; but what is spiritual is far more outstanding, inasmuch as

* * * * *

1157 Ps 68:11 (Vulg 67:12)
1158 Ps 68:13 (Vulg 67:14 *inter medios cleros* 'amidst unknown dangers'). Here the Latin word (accusative plural) *cleros* must be taken over from the Greek κλῆρος meaning 'lot,' either a lot of land or one's destiny; here 'destiny,' 'fate.'
1159 See Prov 3:24; Isa 30:15; 1 Tim 2:2.
1160 Ps 68:13 (Vulg 67:14)
1161 Cf Acts 2:46; Rom 12:8; 2 Cor 1:12, 8:2, 9:11 and 13; Eph 6:5; Col 3:22.
1162 Cf 1 Tim 3:9, 2:8; 2 Tim 1:3. See *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Timotheum priorem* CWE 44 16.
1163 Ps 68:13 (Vulg 67:14). The reference is to pale gold. Erasmus has chosen to call it 'green' perhaps because the Septuagint version of the Psalm uses the word χλωρός (ἐν χλωρότητι χρυσίου), meaning both 'pale' and 'green.' This then allows him in his 'mystical' interpretation of the verse to understand greenness in the sense 'verdant,' 'flourishing.'
1164 That is, the spiritual sense; for Erasmus' distinction between the literal and spiritual sense of Scripture, see introduction 201–5 and books 2 and 3 CWE 68 passim.
1165 Ps 68:12 (Vulg 67:13 *Rex virtutum dilecti dilecti*)
1166 Ps 68:11 (Vulg 67:12)
1167 1 Tim 1:17
1168 Luke 3:22; Matt 3:17; Mark 1:11
1169 John 1:18

according to the Greek proverb as well τὰ δεύτερα [second things] are called ἀμείνω [best].[1170] Perhaps this image depicts the Christian preacher for us. Wings are needed to fly up in the spirit to the heavenly and to draw others up to the same place, but a dove's wings are needed[1171] either because no bird is swifter in flight or because none is simpler or more innocent. But a double ringing is needed, of silver and of gold, in order to be candid and open in explaining the humbler meaning, then to reveal to the more advanced the gold of hidden wisdom, which Paul speaks of in symbols, not to any at all but to the trained.[1172] Earthly wisdom professes great and wonderful things on its surface,[1173] but if you were to penetrate more deeply you would simply find coals instead of treasure.[1174] The nature of evangelical philosophy is different; it has far more in depth than it shows on its surface, and the more deeply you enter, the more magnificent the wealth it shows. How unseemly it would be then if, professing to be a preacher, you were a hog rolling in the muck of vulgar pleasures[1175] instead of a dove, with clay in your heart instead of silver, coals instead of gold. A vessel of clay gives only the sound of clay, and the man of earth speaks the earthly.

There are many other things in Holy Writ that show the dignity, the utility, the difficulty of the preacher's role, and the greatness of the reward awaiting those who carry out their assigned task in good faith, but greater horrors are threatened for those who wear the mask of shepherd[1176] but in fact act like wolves or betrayers of the Lord's flock;[1177] we, however, have preferred to collect the things that attract rather than those that terrify, for one who is driven to his duty by fear can scarcely play the part of an evangelical preacher sincerely. There is faith, which shuns no danger; there is charity, which shuns no toil.[1178] If these two are present, terrors are unnecessary; if they are not, cheap threats give little help, and if they do help, they help the ignorant. The preacher should not be ignorant, since he has undertaken to instruct the ignorant.

* * * * *

1170 See *Adagia* I iii 38 *Posterioribus melioribus* 'Better luck next time.'
1171 Ps 68:13 (Vulg 67:14)
1172 1 Cor 2:6–7
1173 *Adagia* I ix 88 *Prima facie. Prima fronte* 'At first sight. On the face of it.'
1174 *Adagia* I ix 30 *Thesaurus carbones erant* 'The treasure consisted of coals.'
1175 2 Pet 2:22. See *Adagia* IV iii 62 *Sus in volutabro coeni* 'A swine in a wallowing hole of filth.'
1176 Cf Matthew 23.
1177 Cf Matt 7:15.
1178 Cf 1 Cor 13:1–13.

We have shown how dignity need not entail hauteur or the difficulty sloth or the danger despair.

And so this volume appears to be just about full enough if we give some brief advice about how a preacher can secure both favour and authority with the people and keep them once he has them, inasmuch as love for a teacher and the teacher's authority are the two chief stimuli to learning;[1179] love makes us listen gladly and without boredom, while authority makes us believe the truth of what is imparted. When I say love, I understand Christian love, not the ordinary kind; when I say authority, I understand that which is won by virtue, not by bluff. But if someone happens to have these from some other source, the wise man will turn to the profit of piety those human emotions that congregations feel, provided they are neither immoderate nor associated with vice. Many win favour by their pleasant appearance or a common homeland or kinship or some other human feeling; let the preacher seize this opportunity, turning what is human to spiritual profit. Some follow the disciples of St Francis with marvellous zeal, others more eagerly favour the Dominicans. This emotion is purely human and often differs among equally devout persons, and therefore this kind of favour should not be sought; but if it is present on its own, it should be accommodated to the good of the audience. Likewise, many win authority through the actual appearance of their person and the dignity of their countenance, distinguished family, holy dress, title, age, or something else like these; it is alien to Christian perfection to judge someone from external qualities of this kind, for St Paul rebukes those who do so for seeing only what is according to appearance,[1180] since those who value a man highly for these things scorn him for different ones. But because he is compelled to become all things to all people[1181] on account of human weakness, the preacher will use this emotion of the simple as a bait to lure the souls of the inexperienced until they advance to something better. This happened to the Lord, the prince of preachers: his appearance and the lowliness of his life offended many Jews, the weakness of the cross offended even his closest disciples,[1182] yet for a time the Lord allowed himself to be loved by his followers according to the flesh until they advanced to the spiritual.[1183] Similarly Paul's

* * * * *

1179 Cf *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 334.
1180 See 2 Cor 10:7.
1181 1 Cor 9:22
1182 Matt 16:21–5, 26:56; Mark 14:27; John 16:32
1183 That is, until they received the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost; see Acts 2:1–4.

chains scandalized many,[1184] and so he thanks the stronger ones because they had not recoiled from the gospel, offended by their teacher's afflictions. The Lord bids us judge a teacher by his works;[1185] sometimes a mind worthy of heaven is hidden under a filthy cloak in a loathsome and foul body.[1186] And yet Moses forbids anyone blind or lame or hunchbacked or ruptured or marked by any physical blemish at all to approach the altar,[1187] though born of Aaron's stock, or to enter within the veil, not because such things contaminate the Lord's temple but because outer appearance is often an impediment for the weak. Moreover, after the darkness of the Law was abolished,[1188] Roman popes established that no lame, one-eyed, feeble or defective persons, or those below a prescribed age would be admitted to ecclesiastical ministry,[1189] not because there is respect of persons in the eyes of God (for in the Gospel parable beggars, the blind, and the lame are summoned to the royal banquet)[1190] but because the mass of men are influenced to scorn the spiritual by what lies exposed to their physical vision. This emotion of ordinary people should be indulged for a time, but only in such a way that they are gradually enticed to seek a greater perfection; and so a teacher tolerates a pupil who is still a beginner, cajoling him, as it were, with little gifts and compliments lest he recoil from his intention.[1191] Otherwise, it would be unnecessary to mention this; for both authority and general favour will readily attend whoever has been endowed with the virtues that I mentioned earlier, provided he perseveres in them. For approval by everyone's votes has so far been the lot of no mortal man; the preacher must strive as far as possible to please all persons in all things and to get himself good report even among outsiders,[1192] always bearing in mind that saying of Paul, 'Everything is permitted me, but not everything is useful.'[1193]

* * * * *

1184 Phil 1:12–15
1185 See Matt 7:15–20.
1186 Cf James 2:1–5.
1187 Lev 21:17–24
1188 Cf Heb 8:5, 10:1; Col 2:16–17.
1189 See Code of Canon Law (1917), c.984 (2) for 'Irregularities by Defect'; after the 1983 revision, virtually all irregularities of the type Erasmus gives are removed (cf cc.1040–9 'Irregularities and Other Impediments').
1190 Luke 14:12–15
1191 For another statement of these pedagogical practices, see *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 334–5.
1192 1 Thess 4:12
1193 1 Cor 6:12, 10:22; cf *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 189–91.

Therefore, in order to gain authority both more quickly and among more persons, let the preacher carefully avoid those things that bring a man into contempt, and let him exhibit within himself those that the common man esteems. Luxury, drunkenness, somnolence, pleasures (especially lust), silly and foolish chatter, idleness and excessive familiarity, vanity, inconstancy, fawning, grasping after gifts, admiration for the trivial and commonplace render a man contemptible and diminish his authority. On the other hand, authority is secured by sobriety, a frugal life, vigilance, a chaste character, restrained speech seasoned with wit, the ability to keep a secret, seriousness of character, truth in speech, affability tempered by an appropriate gravity, association with all the most serious men, either no or infrequent dealings with men who are worthless or of unchaste reputation, and only for the purpose of admonishing them, not drinking with them, but dealing with them as a doctor deals with the sick.[1194] Let him have such conversations with the wealthy that he neither provokes them to anger by an inappropriate severity nor falls into an appearance of flattery by saying only what they want to hear. Let him accept gifts casually from no one, but let him be courteous in refusing. Let him preserve his liberty intact in all respects, for whoever accepts a gift loses somehow a portion of his trustworthiness, and the giver has less esteem for the receiver. This fault is revealed by its consequences. When a preacher admonishes the giver rather freely, then anger grows hot, and he is called ungrateful, though for a trivial kindness he is returning a far greater. Understanding this, the Apostle does not think it right to take from the Corinthians but preferred to sew skins together rather than lose some part of his apostolic freedom,[1195] not because he hunted glory from men but because this was useful for the gospel.[1196] And so those who willingly run to the tables of the rich and go hunting after rich banquets given by powerful men act to the detriment of their authority; but far worse is the behaviour of those who sit the great part of the day in the public inns of the taverners, among men who are hardly sober, and joke with them about anything at all, drinking up the prescribed measure of wine[1197] themselves

* * * * *

1194 Cf Matt 9:12; Luke 5:31.

1195 1 Cor 9:1, 12, 15, 19; cf Acts 18:3.

1196 1 Cor 9:23

1197 See references to this custom of prescribed measure of wine in Plato *Symposium* 176A–E; Catullus 27.3; Horace *Odes* 2.7.25; and Cicero *In Verrem* 2.5.11 (§28) ('all the laws prescribed for the drinking of wine'). The playwright Eubulus (Euboulos) also gives this information; see *Eubulus: The Fragments* ed R.L. Hunter (Cambridge 1983) 186. The Latin word *hemina* for a portion of wine is attested to in Pliny the Elder, Plautus, Seneca, Aulus Gellius, and

and encouraging others in turn. Sometimes too they play cards and dice far into the night and dance in awkward movements; finally the pastor of the sheep returns home so affected that he has to be propped on the arms of those whose souls should be propped up by him. Add now to this a concubine taking the place of a wife,[1198] and not just one, or if it is just one, a licentious and domineering woman. Who will heed his words, or who will revere him, if he sees that some wretched woman rules him? I ask you, if a man always lives in such a way that he is one of the dregs of the mob, the most abject among the abject, what authority will he have in teaching, what weight in admonition? Or who will dare reveal the drama of his life in confession to a man he sees every day soaked with wine or ale blubbering out even his own secrets? I know that these things are not at all seemly to speak of; I only wish they did not occur everywhere (which is more unseemly still), and not only in villages but in the cities also! In discussing this subject, however, I hope that I shall always be indulged to the extent that if there is occasion to say something by way of admonition, the good people to whom it does not apply will not be offended and those who are subject to these vices will not be angered, for we do not want to expose them to scorn but to render them more acceptable to Christ.

Now, since people everywhere have certain particular follies of their own, such as clubs and drinking parties in churches, superstitious processions of saints like Lieven and Winnoc[1199] in Flanders, and ridiculous festivals, which have become so established by long-standing custom that they

* * * * *

M. Porcius Cato among others; see also *The Rule of Benedict* chapter 40 (On the Measure of Drink): 'Nevertheless, bearing in mind the needs of the weak we believe that a *hemina* of wine each day is sufficient for each person.' See OLD I 868 'hemina,' where the measure is given as 'a liquid or dry measure, one half of a sextarius.'

1198 See *Paraphrasis in epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Timotheum priorem* CWE 44 12–22, where Erasmus describes the ideal behaviour of bishops and priests; and CWE 44 16–18 for views on the proper behaviour of women: 'to follow and not to take the lead or to put on a display of authority in the presence of their husbands, to whom they should be subject in every way.'

1199 Chomarat notes that St Lieven (or Liévin) was martyred in Belgium in the seventh century, and each year on 28 June a procession carried his statue to Ghent, where he is particularly revered (ASD V-4 227 735n). See H. Nowé 'Gentsche voorgeboden op de Sint-Lievensbedevaart' in *Miscellanea Jean Gessler* I ed K.C. Peeters and R. Roemans (Deurne, Drukker 1948) 967–9; *Bibliotheca sanctorum* (Rome 1961–70) VIII 74. For St Winnoc (or Gwynnog), founder of Wormhoudt and of Bergues-Saint Winnoc near Dunkirk in the eighth century, see *Bibliotheca sanctorum* XII 1199.

cannot easily be abolished without commotion, and if they are abolished there is danger of more foolish ones taking the place of those abolished, let the pastor remove himself from such entertainments if only to show in this way that he does not approve the practice. Since there are different forms of such festivals in different regions, I shall present one or two as examples so that the reader may understand what I mean. Among the English it is the custom at London that on a certain day the people bring into the main church, dedicated to St Paul,[1200] the head of a wild animal impaled on a long spear – some there call them *damae*,[1201] most people call them *capri*, though in fact it is a sort of *hircus* [he-goat] with palmate antlers, abundant on that island – all this to the accompaniment of the unlovely sound of hunting horns. In this solemn procession they advance to the high altar; you would say that they were all inspired with the frenzy of Diana.[1202] What is

* * * * *

1200 St Paul's Cathedral was the seat of the bishop of London. See *A History of Saint Paul's Cathedral and the Men Associated with It* ed W.R. Matthews and W.M. Atkins (London 1957). Erasmus might have have observed this custom when he was in London in 1498–9 or 1505–6, or heard of it from John Colet or others. For his six visits to England, see Schoeck (1) 223–34. This example must be a reference to the yearly ceremony ('The Offering of a Buck and a Doe') on 29 June (feast of Saints Peter and Paul) when a buck was presented at the high altar. The story is told by William Camden (1551–1623) that in 1328 a certain Sir William le Baud, in return for a favour granted by the chapter, gave a doe to the dean and canons of the cathedral on 25 January (the Conversion of St Paul) and a fat buck on 29 June. The later date was the occasion for the special procession with bugles. Camden cannot be Erasmus' source, but may provide some hint about its origin. See William Benham *Old St. Paul's Cathedral* (London 1902) 62–3.

1201 It is next to impossible to identify precisely the animals referred to here as *damae*, *capri*, and *hircus*, so they have been left in Latin. *Dama* according to L&S refers generically to 'beasts of the deer kind'; *hircus* is a 'he-goat' or 'buck'; there is no other meaning for *capri* but 'goats,' but goats do not have palmate antlers. We might guess that the animal in question was a male roe deer (*capreolus capreolus*) and that it was vulgarly and mistakenly called *caper*. (A. Dalzell) For *dama* (*damma*), see also OLD 1 530: 'the general name of various, usu. small, members of the deer family (red or fallow deer, gazelle, antelope, etc.).'

1202 Diana (Greek Artemis) was the Roman goddess of the hunt. It is likely Erasmus takes this aspect of Diana from Phoenix's words to Achilles in Homer's *Iliad* 9.530–49, which tell of the huge, fierce boar that Diana (Artemis) set loose in her rage upon the land and people of Calydon in revenge for the insult she received from King Oeneus for not offering her the first fruits of his land's harvest. See also Plutarch's likely reference to this and other aspects of Diana's frenzied nature in *De superstitione*, *Moralia* 170A–B. See also the Homeric Hymn 27 'To Artemis,' which celebrates her mastery as archer in the violence of the hunt.

the pastor to do in this situation? If he were to protest, custom is a powerful thing, and he might sooner stir up a revolt than remedy the problem. Elsewhere the body of the Lord is carried about through the fields, all the more disgracefully because it is borne by a priest on horseback.[1203] In villages and even in some towns the guilds of artisans have their own processions.[1204] Poles are carried erect by many men who sweat and would faint if they were not continually refreshed with drink; at the top is a saint, the patron of each craft. The people have other festivals and processions as well, in which stage shows are brought around, maidens in marvellous costumes are led about, and many things are said and done that are more to be concealed than approved. Such also are the bull contests among the Italians, and the races of asses, buffaloes, and horses.[1205] It is not seemly that those whose

* * * * *

1203 Erasmus is likely referring to the Feast of Corpus Christi, which had been inspired by St Juliana of Liège (d 1256) and made an official feast of the Roman church under Pope Urban IV (1261–4); held on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, it often featured a procession in which the Eucharist was carried through the town and surrounding area. For a thorough look at the feast of Corpus Christi, see Miri Rubin *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge and New York 1991).

1204 Erasmus speaks of processions held by guilds and confraternities; in many European cities processions of this kind can still be observed today. On confraternities in Italy at this time, see Christopher F. Black *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge 1989; repr 2003); and especially his 'The development of confraternity studies over the last thirty years' in *Politics of Ritual Kingship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy* ed Nicholas Terpstra (Cambridge and New York 2000) 9–29; and Christopher F. Black 'Confraternities, Hospitals and Philanthropy' in his *Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Italy* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York 2004) 130–48.

1205 For the kinds of violent games and sports Erasmus alludes to here, see his *In psalmum 38* CWE 65 103 and n420; and his letter to John Choler (Basel, August 1535), Ep 3032:417–31 where he speaks negatively of the bullfight he witnessed at the palace of Julius II: 'Huiusmodi spectaculum risimus in palatio Iulii Secundi, quo ad taurea ab amicis quibusdam eram pertractus: nam ipse nunquam cruentis illis ludis ac vetustate paganitatis reliquiis sum delectatus'; Martine Boiteux 'Chasse aux taureaux à Rome' in *Les jeux à la Renaissance: Actes du XXIIIe Colloque international d'études humanistes, Tours, juillet 1980* ed Philippe Ariès and Jean-Claude Margolin (Paris 1982) 33–53; and Charles L. Stinger *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington and Indianapolis 1985) 57–8 and n160. In *Supputatio* LB IX 516C–517A Erasmus speaks of bullfights he saw just before Lent in Siena (*ex prisco ritu agebantur taurea, veteris Paganismi vestigia*). Widely known today is Siena's *palio*, whose origins go back to the Middle Ages; see *The Palio and Its Image: History, Culture and Representation of Siena's Festival* ed Maria A. Ceppari Ridolfi, Marco Ciampolini, Patrizia Turrini; texts

authority should recall the people from such follies should attend shows of this kind. The same opinion should be held about similar shows that occur on occasion, such as when a wealthy bride is wed or when princes put on their own productions at funerals[1206] or victory celebrations,[1207] to which the ignorant masses run with foolish enthusiasm. Only with difficulty did Christians remove the contests of boxers and gladiators;[1208] but when this ill cannot be uprooted utterly, the wise preacher will temper the licence, if he can, or at least not show the multitude his apparent approval by watching.

Furthermore, just as excessive familiarity breeds contempt,[1209] so a man's homeland sometimes diminishes his authority, as happened to the Lord Jesus, who learned himself by experience the validity of that proverbial expression that says that a prophet is less esteemed in his own land.[1210] There are two remedies against this human attitude: the preacher may do as the Lord did, leave his neighbours and relatives and betake himself elsewhere to teach the gospel,[1211] or he may withdraw to some far distant region especially celebrated for its reputation in religion and studies, and after a

* * * * *

by Raffaele Argenziano et al; with the collaboration of Sonia Corsi, Laura Vigni; photography by Andrea and Fabio Lensini; trans Anthony Brierley et al (Florence 2003). For sports of this kind in general, see also Julius R. Ruff *Violence in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge 2001), especially chapter 5: 'Ritual group violence' 160–83, where the author takes up the violence 'inflicted on animals' (173) in games involving bulls, cocks, dogs, badgers, bears, geese, roosters, and cats.

1206 See Erasmus' description of a funeral cortege ('pompous funerals, which border on insanity') in *Paraphrasis in Marcum* CWE 49 72–3 (Mark 5:40).

1207 Erasmus himself witnessed Julius II's triumphal entry into Bologna on 11 November 1506 after the pope's victory over the Bentivogli; see ASD I-1 573 and Ep 205:42–3: 'Pope Julius is waging war, conquering, leading triumphal processions; in fact, playing Julius to the life.' See also *Julius exclusus* CWE 27 172, 174. For this aspect of Julius II and his pontificate (1503–13), see Christine Shaw *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass 1993).

1208 See Ep 1400 to Francis I (preface to *Paraphrasis in Marcum*, Basel, 1 December 1523) where Erasmus discusses the suppression of gladiator contests by the emperor Honorius after hearing that the monk Telemachus had been stoned by the mob for trying to stop a gladiator match. See CWE 10 120–1. This story is from the *Tripartite History* of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, translated by Epiphanius and edited by Cassiodorus; see *The Ecclesiatical History of Theodoret* 5.26 NPNF 2nd series 3 151.

1209 This is a common saying (*nimia familiaritas parit contemptum*), one Erasmus does not include in his *Adagia*. See eg Walther and Schmidt 38823c (II 688).

1210 Luke 4:24: Matt 13:57; Mark 6:4; John 4:44

1211 Matt 4:13

long stay there return at last as a foreigner, excitedly and eagerly awaited now by many.

In addition, both ages, youth and quite advanced old age, also sometimes breed contempt; the former is scorned for its inexperience, the latter is despised as having no sense. A remedy will be found for both problems: let the youth obey the advice of the Apostle, 'Let no one despise your youth.'[1212] 'How will that happen?' you say. If he arranges his life, his speech, his expression, and all his gestures in accordance with sobriety, modesty, gravity, and constancy so as to reveal in himself the truth of what that famous wise man said, 'Venerable old age is not in length of days nor calculated by the number of years.'[1213] Age brings grey hair and a wrinkled brow even to the foolish and feeble-minded, but only the greyness that shines in a character free from all appearance of levity and youthful desires is venerable. Old men will protect their authority if they are always sober, if they are seldom difficult or irascible, and if they avoid useless chatter but are sparing and careful in their words so that they speak only after forethought either what is necessary or what is useful and allow nothing to slip out that is silly or too trivial to mention or altogether unworthy of their grey hairs, especially when in the company of young people; and let him not be harsh or grumpy in scolding when the situation requires rebuke but temper the bitterness of his admonition with Christian gentleness, and not involve himself in every kind of business (not all roles of a play suit every actor) but leave certain things to others. In sum, let him govern all his actions in such a way that old age seems to have brought him only greater experience, more perceptive judgment, more reliable counsel, a more forgiving mind. Thus it will happen that just as Paul bids widows who are truly widows to be honoured, so the people revere elders who are truly elders.[1214]

But to return to what we said about giving, we admit that it is quite fair for those who minister at the altar to live off the altar,[1215] but only to live, not to live in luxury; yet it would be highly desirable if more were to imitate the shining example of the apostle Paul, who preached the gospel without fee not because he did not know what was due but because he gave more consideration to what served the spreading of Christ's religion and the protection of apostolic authority, especially among the Corinthians, who

* * * * *

1212 1 Tim 4:12
1213 Wisd of Sol 4:8
1214 1 Tim 5:3
1215 Cf 1 Cor 9:13.

were both wealthy and eager for profit.[1216] If only people like the Corinthians were not everywhere these days, since you will find nobody like Paul! Someone might say that introducing this model would inevitably prove useless, because at present when people are required to bring their carnal offerings to the sower of spiritual seed, you see very few who pay what they owe in good faith; so what would happen if they learned through an unpaid preacher to give nothing? Once they had a taste of these guts[1217] they would never be pushed away, and so it would soon come to pass that, with salaries abolished and none being found who were willing to teach unpaid, the churches would be stripped entirely of pastors. But this reasoning in no way deterred Paul from boasting that he served as an unpaid evangelist,[1218] and he did not fear a lack of heralds of the word but was more afraid that the generosity of the people might invite wolves instead of shepherds;[1219] for all hasten towards profit, but only the truly devout can rise to unpaid labour. But if there were no lack of people to support apostles and elders of their own volition in those days when there was such a scarcity of Christians and no prescribed salaries that could be demanded, how is it that we are now afraid that good and faithful pastors will lack food and clothing? Those like the Corinthians will not give, but those like the Macedonians will give the more generously;[1220] there is no population that does not combine both kinds, and Paul's example, if exhibited once or twice, would perhaps inspire more to emulation. Why should we not hope for the same thing here that we see happening every day in other situations?

In antiquity someone, half covered by a robe, started to walk about with a staff and to live by begging and curse those in his way. Not only was there no lack of people to imitate this practice, but a school of philosophers arose from it called the Cynics.[1221] Likewise among the Christians there was someone who went about wearing an iron breastplate,[1222] though otherwise unclothed; far from there not being an imitator, a new order was added to

* * * * *

1216 Cf 1 Cor 4:8–13; 2 Corinthians 9.

1217 See *Adagia* II iv 22 *Periculosum est canem intestina gustasse* 'It is risky for a dog to taste guts.'

1218 2 Cor 11:7; 1 Cor 9:18

1219 Acts 20:29

1220 Cf 2 Cor 11:9.

1221 Erasmus refers to the philosopher Diogenes of Sinope (c 400–325 BC), called 'the dog' because of the thoroughly unconventional style of life he and his followers adopted. The word 'Cynic' derives from the Greek word 'dog' (ὁ κύων). See OCD 348; and Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* (*Diogenes*) 6.20–81.

1222 See Rev 9:7–9: 'In appearance the locusts were like horses arrayed for battle . . . they had scales like iron breastplates . . .' Cf 1 Thess 5:8 and Eph 6:14.

the swarms of monks. There was another who walked about through summer and winter alike covered with a tunic of hemp but with the rest of his body bare, carrying a wooden cross and having no home to which to betake himself and touching no money and feeding only upon bread and greens or raw fruits and drinking only plain water;[1223] we see that there has been no lack of imitators. Who would have believed that there would be people to imitate the practice of St Francis? The world is everywhere full of them. Indeed, I think that if there were someone who covered his genitals with fig leaves instead of a loincloth but was otherwise nude, walked about in bronze sandals as Empedocles did,[1224] and fed upon beans instead of wheat, common grass, or hay instead of vegetables, there would be no lack of imitators. How much more must we hope that, if someone were to revive the example of so illustrious an apostle, there would be many to imitate it, especially since there is no need today for a preacher to wander through various regions of the world, and there is no one to strip priests of their patrimony or snatch away the resources gained by their industry.

But if it seems too ungracious to reject the voluntary generosity of good people, let the preacher adopt this compromise. Let him excuse himself politely to those who have people at home in greater need of such assistance or to those who do not seem to be giving sincerely but either for ostentation or for some other human reason, hoping perhaps that by tossing a morsel they can stop up the mouth of those who preach the truth of the gospel sincerely. Such was the kindness of Balaac, king of the Moabites,[1225] who hired Balaam to curse the people of Israel. Let him point out to the former those on whom they could better bestow what they have determined to put into the temple treasure;[1226] let him take away from the latter their hope of

* * * * *

1223 Erasmus is recalling stories of monks similar to those related by Theodoret of Cyrrus in his *Historia religiosa* (*A History of the Monks of Syria*) trans Richard M. Price (Kalamazoo 1985).

1224 Empedocles (c 492–32 BC), Greek philosopher who postulated that the entire universe consists of only four basic elements – earth, air, fire, and water; all existents are comprised of these in some combination, if not in their pure element. His bronze sandals are mentioned by Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* (*Empedocles*) 11. See OCD 382.

1225 See Num 22:1–40.

1226 See Matt 27:6; Mark 7:11. The Latin *corbona* renders the word *corban* (*korban*, *qorban*) from the Hebrew, meaning 'a gift' to the temple treasury. See JBC II 36–7 (42F). Erasmus addresses this in his *Paraphrasis in Marcum* CWE 49 91, where he presents it as a perversion of the Mosaic law when the priests promoted giving to the temple treasury by allowing children to avoid caring for needy parents in dedicating their money to the temple treasury, which restricted it to exclusively sacred purposes.

corrupting a tongue that has been dedicated to preaching Christ. Let him accept, if he so decides, what has been offered willingly by others, but accept it in order to dispense it to others; let him not lose his own glory, in which he glories not according to the flesh but in the Lord.[1227]

I know that the Levites and priests and high priests of the Old Testament, who lived off tithes,[1228] victims,[1229] and gifts,[1230] will be cited in objection to us; but they were provided for in this way because they had no other lot in sharing the Promised Land.[1231] Yet the author of the New Law, who calls his people to the example of the sparrows and the lilies,[1232] removed rather than confirmed this provision. Without doubt it is characteristic of evangelical perfection to deserve more and demand less, and to refrain from the appearance of hawking the word of God such that you impart sacred teaching even to the rich without compensation in order to do it to greater profit and give assistance to the poor even from your own resources. In addition, the ministers of the Mosaic religion sustained not only themselves together with their assistants[1233] but also their wives and children and slaves and serving girls out of what Moses had granted them; now, however, being the less encumbered by such burdens, priests need that much less. The former nourished their descendants, who were to succeed to the ministry; in place of wives and children, let ours nourish – but nourish more with spiritual teaching than with money – those that they know will turn out suitable heralds of evangelical philosophy. Some make the following invalid syllogism: if those who sacrificed calves and goats lived off tithes, how much more is owed to those who handle more sacred things.[1234] I am not disputing now what is owed, but what it is seemly to demand: the loftier the evangelical office is, the purer it ought

* * * * *

1227 1 Cor 1:31; 2 Cor 10:17
1228 Num 18:21; Deut 18:1–5; Gen 14:20
1229 Exod 29:28–35
1230 Num 18:29–31
1231 That the Levites did not have a 'lot' in the Promised Land is contradicted by Num 35:2–8 where Moses assigns cities and their territories to the Levites; Joshua carries out Moses' directive (Joshua 21).
1232 Matt 6:26–9, 10:29–31
1233 Latin *diaconi*. The 'assistants' here must surely refer to the lower ranks of the Levites, 'the brothers of the tribe of Levi' (Num 18:2), since they received 'their portion of the tithe' according to Num 18:21–32.
1234 Erasmus calls this an 'invalid syllogism,' which it is; as Chomarat notes, it is a syllogism only so in the wide sense of 'argumentation'; it is properly a comparison *a maiore*.

to be from temporal profit. Besides, if they find the enthymeme[1235] from Levites to evangelists appealing, they will on the same basis reason as follows: they had wives, much more is the same permitted to us.[1236] Invert the enthymeme, and it will be valid: The priests of the Old Testament were not permitted to possess wealth,[1237] much less is it permitted to ours;[1238] they were not permitted to keep a concubine,[1239] much less is the same permitted to ours;[1240] they were not permitted to have relations with their wife, at least when they were serving the temple, much less is it permitted to ours.

Because they were given freely and gladly, the things that were once given to the heralds of the gospel were called εὐλογίαι, that is, 'blessings,'[1241] because the giver considered himself more blessed than the recipient. In some places now, since personal, predial, and windfall tithes[1242] are extorted with imprecations and threats from people who baulk and curse, they are more truly κακολογίαι [curses] than εὐλογίαι. While that is hateful in itself, the resentment is doubled if those who so scrupulously[1243] demand what they think is owed them are utterly forgetful of their own duty, but we see it happen that none demand more insistently than those to whom the least

* * * * *

1235 Quintilian 5.10.1–3 gives a few definitions of enthymeme: 'a proposition with a reason ... a conclusion of an argument drawn either from denial of consequents or from incompatibles ... a rhetorical syllogism ... an incomplete syllogism ...' Erasmus deals at length with this form of rhetorical argumentation for preaching; see book 2 CWE 68 passim.

1236 Though not making this argument, St Paul does argue that he has the right to take a Christian wife with him as do Cephas and the other apostles (1 Cor 9:5).

1237 Deut 18:1–2

1238 Matt 19:21; Mark 10:21; Luke 18:22; cf Matt 5:3, 19:23–4; Luke 6:20.

1239 Lev 21:7

1240 1 Cor 6:12–20

1241 The word εὐλογίαι means 'praise,' 'speaking well,' 'the act of blessing.' Erasmus means here the idea of 'a bountiful gift,' 'bounty' (2 Cor 9:5; cf Heb 6:7) bestowed upon the evangelists by the community.

1242 'Tithes' had their foundation in the Old Testament; see Gen 14:20; Lev 27:30–1; Num 18:24, 28 and 28:21; Deut 12:6, 11 and 14:22. The Christian church understood the giving of tithes as a divine obligation. The three types of tithes noted by Erasmus concern the tithe on the annual crops (predial); on what has been nourished by the land such as sheep and cattle (mixed); and the work of one's hands (personal). The 'windfall' tithes may refer to the produce of the land or revenue of inherited property, which would be subject to tithing; see 'tithes' ODCC 1626; 'tithes' NCE 14 90–2; 'Tithes' DMA 12 62–5.

1243 For 'scrupulously,' see *Adagia* I V 91 *Ad unguem* 'To the fingernail.'

is owed; for 'to presbyters a twofold honour'[1244] is due, as the Apostle says, but he adds, 'to those who rule well.' Suppose a layperson offers as excuse his poverty, the need to support his wife and children; he is not heeded. Suppose someone offers as excuse a shipwreck or fire or similar catastrophe; he is not heeded but is told, 'God wants to lose nothing.' We have not read of anything similar happening even among the Jews. I am not acting now as an advocate for ingrates but looking out for the preacher's authority.

In later centuries certain bishops used to accept what was offered but with the intention of dispensing for the support of the needy what remained from their temperate lifestyle. But St Cyprian bids the poor be supported from his own money;[1245] St Basil fed the poor from his own resources.[1246] Augustine, who allowed nothing to be forced upon him that could not pass into common use,[1247] departed very little from the Apostle's freedom; in what words then does he beg from the people? 'Brothers, I have nothing to give the poor; let your charity help them.'[1248] He refused some things offered by those who seemed to have people at home needing help; to someone who had repented his generosity he gave back some things that had already been given and signed over to the church's authority, though not unaware that what has once been dedicated to God should not be demanded back, but the lofty-minded man preferred to reduce the authority of the church rather than appear acquisitive or a greedy seagull.[1249]

The situation is much less squalid in some lands where the pastor demands nothing from the congregation but has a salary set for him from elsewhere, enough to suffice for a frugal and temperate man. He has a comfortable house, a small garden that provides various delights for his table, a little vineyard that bears enough wine for someone who drinks it well diluted and sparingly, and he has a coop that supplies an egg and sometimes even a chicken; if twelve ducats[1250] are added to this, there is already

* * * * *

1244 1 Tim 5:17

1245 Cf Cyprian *On Works and Alms* ANF V 476–84 passim.

1246 See Gregory of Nazianzus *Oration* 43.35 (Funeral Oration on the Great St Basil) NPNF 2nd series 7 407.

1247 The Rule of Augustine is from his *Letter* 211. See WSA II-4 19–28. For this letter see especially George Lawless *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule* (Oxford 1987).

1248 This exact phrase (*fratres non habeo quod dem pauperibus, subveniat illis charitas vestra*) does not appear in Augustine; Erasmus might be recalling this from memory.

1249 For 'sea-gull' (*larus*), see *Adagia* II ii 33 *Larus* 'Seamew.'

1250 The ducat was a coin issued under the Holy Roman emperors representing the

something left over beyond his simple life to relieve the poverty of a few. But to what depths of squalor some have now sunk! Begging takes place during the very act of worship, and the sacristan, jingling a tin plate and calling loudly again and again, invites – not to say compels – the congregation to give; the priest all the while stands by disgracefully observing who gives, who does not. Some do the same during sermons; a collection plate is passed around and a subsidy sought – demanded, rather – for the preacher. I am not objecting to these practices if need should require, but I am showing how far they are from that apostolic pride that I should like to see imitated by as many as possible. One pious and unlettered man was discovered to have written, 'Let them go confidently for charity, nor should they be ashamed, since the Lord made himself poor for us in this world,'[1251] and behold, we see the world full of those who willingly profess begging.[1252] But that illustrious evangelist, who says, 'I want all to be as I am,'[1253] boasts so often that he obtained his own livelihood with his own hands[1254] in order to teach the gospel without charge, that he worked night and day so as to burden no one[1255] – he has found hardly a single imitator.

As excuse many offer necessity, a hard weapon[1256] indeed, but the source of that necessity must be considered. The actual pastor[1257] delegates

* * * * *

value of a little more than three and a half grams of gold; see CWE 1 314, 332–47, especially 336–7, 'Money and coinage of the age of Erasmus,' for the table of monies in Erasmus' times. The Habsburgs minted many ducats throughout Erasmus' lifetime; see also Arthur L. Friedberg and Ira S. Friedberg *Gold Coins of the World: From Ancient Times to the Present* 7th ed (Clifton, NJ 2001) 92–7.

1251 Erasmus refers here to St Francis of Assisi. See *Francis of Assisi* I, *The Later Rule* (1223), chapter VI 103: 'Let the brothers not make anything their own, neither house, nor place, nor anything at all. As pilgrims and strangers in this world, serving the Lord in poverty and humility, let them go seeking alms with confidence, and they should not be ashamed because, for our sakes, our Lord made Himself poor in this world.'

1252 Erasmus refers here to the number of religious belonging to the mendicant orders, ie Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, Servites, and Augustinians; cf ODCC 'Mendicant Friars' 1070.

1253 Erasmus refers here to St Paul; see 1 Cor 7:7.

1254 See 1 Cor 4:12; Acts 20:34.

1255 1 Thess 2:5–10; 1 Cor 9:16–19

1256 See *Adagia* II iii 40 *Ingens telum necessitas* 'Necessity's a mighty weapon.'

1257 For 'actual pastor' (*verus pastor*), cf John 10:11–16. If translated literally as 'true pastor,' Erasmus surely means this ironically. Such individuals, as Erasmus notes elsewhere, delegate their offices to others but keep the tithes for themselves.

his roles to another, doling out a little something from the tithes; he in turn hires it out to another, leaving him nothing but the gleanings after the harvest[1258] is already over. The same complaint is made about some monasteries and about colleges[1259] that have curacies incorporated (for that is the language these people use): the money, that is, the wool, they keep for themselves, the sheep they hand over to a hungry man, often an ignorant and shameless fellow, who will skin them.[1260] And are we surprised that a pastor lacks the authority that he should have with the people? The role of bishops or princes here should be to force those who receive compensation to perform their duty. So much concerning authority.

What is it pertinent to say about gaining good will?[1261] Nothing wins true love more effectively than serving everyone cheerfully and without compensation; even ferocious animals are tamed by kindness and enticed to friendship. Imagine now for me such a preacher as we are seeking, the sort who makes himself completely available for helping everyone, keeping watch for the salvation of each with more than fatherly or motherly concern, teaching the ignorant, gently calling back those who stray, cheering the sick, consoling the bereaved, aiding the afflicted, assisting the oppressed; who entrusts the newborn to Christ, attends the dying, buries the dead, comforts the needy, prays and makes offering for the salvation of all; who, in sum, leaves no one untouched by his kindness and does this both constantly and gladly, asking no reward at all from anyone in return for these services, not money, not

* * * * *

1258 Cf Lev 19:9–10. Erasmus' allusion to the divine command to provide for the poor is obviously to be taken ironically.

1259 Latin *collegia*; Erasmus refers to the colleges at a university, such as the Collège du Montaigu at Paris, Balliol at Oxford, Queens' College at Cambridge, where stipends were paid to their curates, ie priests with the care of souls (*cura animarum*). Chomarat notes that the chapel of the college is also a parish church; ASD V-4 235 925n.

1260 See *Adagia* III vii 12 *Boni pastoris est, tondere pecus, non deglubere* 'The good shepherd shears the sheep; he doesn't skin them.'

1261 Erasmus refers to the importance rhetoricians place upon garnering 'good will'; this comes from *ethos*, whereby '[the calm and gentle passions] persuade and induce a feeling of goodwill'; see Quintilian 6.2.8–19, especially where he discusses the difference between *pathos* and *ethos* and what it is in the orator and in his speaking that generates good will in his listeners; he observes that 'the chief merit in its [ethos'] expression lies in making it seem that all that we say derives directly from the nature of the facts and persons concerned and in the revelation of the character of the orator in such a way that all may recognise it.' See Lausberg §§257.2a.

subservience, not glory. Who, I ask, is so hardened that he would not both love and revere a man like this as some deity come down from heaven? Such charity compels even the wicked to a mutual love; but if there are some who could bear to hate such a man obstinately, what would they gain except to be judged by everyone more bestial than any beast? These are much the most effective charms, the most potent philtres for winning – and not just winning but even wresting – good will from men.

The others are more trivial but have no little force when added to these. For the heroic virtues[1262] do not reject the services of whatever human endowments have been instilled by nature or training and effort, rather they courteously embrace, purify, and perfect them;[1263] yet it happens sometimes that men endowed with those outstanding virtues seem careless about these lesser matters, just as nothing is entirely happy in the affairs of mortals.[1264]

Socrates, a man highly praised among the heathen,[1265] occasioned no little hatred for himself by a familiar irony in all his conversation, which in him, however, was not a flaw but nature;[1266] Plato was accused of arrogance, though in him this was not τύφος [arrogance] but σεμνότης [solemnity], for what I mean is better said in Greek.[1267] Diogenes' sharp and witty outspokenness was mocked by many;[1268] Xenocrates' austerity troubled some;[1269] Stilpo's affability, which took everything in a good way, even

* * * * *

1262 Erasmus' understanding of the 'heroic virtues' and his brief sketch of the selfless preacher anticipate the marks of 'heroic sanctity' characteristic of Counter-Reformation saints in the decades to come; see Romeo DeMaio 'L'ideale eroico nei processi di canonizzazione della Controriforma' in *Riforme e miti nella Chiesa del Cinquecento* (Naples 1973) 257–78; and DS 7 337–43 'Héroïcité des vertues.'

1263 See Thomas Aquinas *Summae theologiae* I IIae q 61 a 4.

1264 See *Adagia* III i 87 *Nihil est ab omni parte beatum* 'Naught is at all points blest'; and Horace *Odes* 2.16.27–8.

1265 See nn131 and 645 above. Erasmus refers here to Socrates' inner 'daemon,' which prompted him to search for the truth; see Plato *Apology* 31C–D, 40A; cf *Symposium* 202D–203A.

1266 Cicero frequently refers to Socrates' irony, sometimes calling him an εἴρων 'dissembler'; see *De officiis* 1.30.108; *Brutus* 85.292, 87.299; *Academica* II (*Lucullus*) 2.5.15.

1267 Ie solemnity, dignity, or seriousness rather than arrogance. See LSJ 1591 σεμνότης.

1268 See Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* (*Diogenes*) 6.2 passim; and Lucian *Vitarum auctio* 8–11.

1269 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* (*Xenocrates*) 4.2.6–15

what tends to give great offence to the mass of men, seemed hardly worthy of a philosopher.[1270] In Scipio Africanus there was a natural majesty;[1271] in Lucius Crassus the orator possessed a modesty that added grace to his speech rather than obscuring his talents;[1272] Cicero lost some authority from his fondness for jesting;[1273] the elder Cato's censorial severity towards everyone won him considerable resentment,[1274] and the famous Cato of Utica seemed unfairly harsh.[1275] You could also find similar differences of character among the men made famous by the commendation of religion. Ambrose is everywhere easy-going and pleasant rather than powerful,[1276] Augustine charming and firm, Jerome powerful, frank, sometimes rather austere too. Chrysostom was rebuked by his rivals because he liked to take food alone.[1277] This characteristic sobriety of his was criticized as inhospitality; his diction shows that he was a man nicely suited to teaching. In Basil you could sense an outstanding loftiness of soul tempered by a thoughtful affability; Gregory of Nazianzus is rather shrewd; Athanasius had an admirable ability in getting things done; in Cyprian you would marvel at his natural speaking ability. Why should I say more? There is no less variety in men's talents than in their face and voice.

It is not always safe to change into a different character the way that Demea[1278] in the comedies suddenly becomes quite unlike himself, but one must try to correct towards virtue what nature has sown deep within us, if it is associated with vice.[1279] If the natural condition is simple, one must beware of it degenerating into a kindred vice, that, say, a natural gravity does not turn into harshness, cruelty, and meanness, or a placid temperament

* * * * *

1270 Plutarch *Moralia* 5F (*De liberis educandis*); *Demetrius* 893
1271 See eg Livy 26.18–19; cf Cicero *Brutus* 87.299.
1272 Cicero *De oratore* 1.26.122
1273 Quintilian 6.3.2–3
1274 Plutarch *Cato Censor* 18–19
1275 Plutarch *Cato of Uticensis* 1
1276 See Erasmus' preface to *Ambrosii Opera*, Ep 1855:257–63. See especially Paulinus of Milan *Vita sancti Ambrosii*.
1277 See *Sozomen* 8.9 404–5. See J.N.D. Kelly *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom, Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (Ithaca 1995) 126–7.
1278 Demea is the country-dwelling father in Terence's *Adelphi* who allowed one of his two sons to be raised by his brother Micio, an Athenian city dweller. Demea's method of education was severe, Micio's gentle and indulging. Chomarat observes that the Demea and Micio brothers represent two opposing models of education: force and severity, sweetness and indulgence; ASD V-4 238 and 976–7n.
1279 Erasmus provides an extensive treatment of vices and virtues in book 4.

turn into carelessness and contempt, or flattery into fawning. Moreover, there must be no pretence in correcting these things. What is feigned cannot endure, and the sorts of thing that you try against Minerva's will[1280] generally turn out unsuccessfully; if we do not struggle against her, it is still possible for different personalities to win equal authority and favour. Let the man who is naturally obliging and merry avoid the appearance of flattery and frivolity; let the man who is too talkative try to speak only when the need arises; let one who is too quiet and gloomy temper his native austerity with affability for the real benefit of his neighbours; let charity and zeal for piety stimulate one who is too easy-going. Nature's faults are easily corrected if the habit is not of too long standing. Yet it is profitable to be open to advice in these matters, for we see others' business more clearly than our own.

Now, both age and homeland cause no small difference in character. Adolescence abandons itself to pleasures and wantonness if it is not restrained; youth is impetuous and unthinking; old age is generally gloomier, more irritable, more careful, and slower to forgive. Out of each we should take what utility it contains, correct what tends to vice. Let the playfulness of our tender years be tamed by liberal studies; let the ardour of youth be tempered by the precepts of philosophy; let the weakness of age be propped up by reason, counsel, and carefulness. Likewise, the German will strive to be strong while avoiding cruelty and will not be easily pushed into impiety. Let the Spaniard thirst for the glory of Christ; let the Italian show in other things too the temperance that he displays in food and drink; let the Frenchman direct his natural facility to the service of God; let the Guelderlander turn his natural shrewdness into evangelical wisdom; let the Hollander season his natural simplicity with evangelical wisdom. Lest I make myself a bore by multiplying examples, let each one make a similar evaluation about others for himself in his own mind.

Therefore, by knowing and noticing these differences of character, age, and region, let each prescribe rules for himself by which both to correct what tends to vice and to promote what displays the quality of virtue. These things, I admit, are rather trivial and related to human weakness, but they are still not to be neglected if they serve those sublime endowments of the Holy Spirit, in so far as we are engaged men with men, the weak with the weak. May the Lord be pleased to inspire qualities more effective than these

* * * * *

1280 *Adagia* I i 42 *Invita Minerva* 'Against Minerva's will'; see CWE 31 91 n42. The following sentence then must mean: if we do not try to alter our character, we may still win favour and influence.

in the minds of his shepherds so that they may all despise the cheap rewards of this world and apply themselves wholeheartedly to this most beautiful campaign of all, to receive after a short time – for what is more fleeting than this life? – the eternal crown of blessed immortality. And if any labour is to be expended here (for nothing important is accomplished without effort), let them consider how great a solace it will be to hear the beatific words, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of your Lord; come, valiant leader, and celebrate a heavenly triumph, take your share of joy since you did not refuse to share afflictions for my sake.'[1281] What a celebration there will be, what applause, what a glad acclamation when you see many there who will attribute to you the receipt of their happiness, of their salvation, whom you led to godliness, whom you recalled from error, whom you inflamed with a love for the blessings of heaven. Indeed, since perfect charity makes everything there common to all, what will be more fortunate, more splendid, or more glorious than you when the countless myriads of heavenly orders will congratulate you on every side with one mouth, with harmonious voice, and will give thanks to Christ the prince, who deigned to increase through you that blessed company that for perfect beatitude needs only to have the number of the elect filled up, and happiness will be full and absolute in every respect after the resurrection of bodies!

But the consideration of what I mentioned above ought rightly to stimulate not only teachers to teaching but also their audiences to zeal for learning and readiness in obedience, for how alertly and vigorously someone teaches depends in no small part upon his pupils. How few could you find whose temper is so patient that they could long retain zeal, eagerness, and passion in teaching if they saw that out of so many so few come to the sermon, then that among these few there are so few on whom their effort is not wasted, as some, heavy with drink, though hearing do not hear, others show boredom in their whole face and whole body, nodding, spitting, belching, coughing, others listen to the preacher with the same expression as they do an actor performing in the theatre, many sleep, and some even snore loudly because they come to the sermon with distended belly, coming only to while away the day and shake off the tedium of the house, are deaf to the rest, and wait only for something witty or amusing to occur that they can recite over dinner to their fellow drinkers. And yet still worse than these are the ones who do not come to learn but to catch something to find fault with and do not mask this intention but betray it by laughs and grins,

* * * * *

1281 See Matt 25:21–3 (parable of the talents); 2 Cor 2:14.

sometimes even whistling and grumbling. I pass over now the wailing children, the barking dogs, the disruptive gossips. And are we surprised if we have preachers who are less than conscientious? Or do we forget that they are human too? Actors of comedies complain about the spectators and beg them by their attentive silence to assist them to act correctly; otherwise the acting is uninspired. Is what an actor rightly demands denied to heralds of the word of salvation? You attend the theatre to see trifles, and you listen; but at the sermon you sleep, though you would hear something to make you both better to yourself and dearer to God. If the preacher starts up a tale about the wool of a goat or about the shadow of an ass[1282] (for some deliberately mix in such things), you wake up, rub the sleep from your eyes, prick up your ears, summon your attention; and do you have no ears for what contributes to true and eternal happiness? A preacher would rightly be dispirited if he saw that the congregation listened attentively indeed to what was being taught but that no fruit of his teaching appeared in their character; how much more justly would he feel dispirited if he saw that the scorn of the crowd was so great that they could not even endure the words of the teaching that brings salvation? They listen eagerly to the entertainer in the marketplace chattering ridiculous, sometimes even obscene, trifles; and do they not extend the same hearing to the teacher of heavenly philosophy? We support the actor so that he will not have learned his part in vain, should he be hissed off the stage; how much more justly should we support the preacher, who has spent his life preparing with the utmost effort and labour to improve the people. As well, even if the actor is hooted off, that occasions no loss to the spectators; on the other hand, if the preacher tells his story to deaf ears,[1283] all the loss falls on the people, but he himself will be held excused in the eyes of God since he carried out his delegated task in accordance with his ability. But what sort of loss? Not of flocks or of money, not of health or of physical sensation, but the most destructive of all: ignorance of the truth, mental blindness, impiety, the deadly afflictions of the soul. If someone were to scatter presents into the crowd, such as coins or biscuits, how eager, how large a throng would gather from

* * * * *

1282 See *Adagia* I iii 53 *De lana caprina* 'About goat's wool.' The adage is applied to inconsequential disputes and to bad-tempered persons ready to argue with friends 'on the slightest pretext.' See also *Adagia* I iii 52 *De asini umbra* 'About an ass's shadow.' The adage, like the previous one, refers to a matter of no moment.

1283 See *Adagia* I iv 87 *Surdo canis, surdo fabulam narras* 'You are singing, or telling a story to the deaf.'

everywhere; but how much more precious are the things that the preacher takes from the treasure house of heavenly philosophy and scatters from the pulpit. The riches that are scattered are those of the wisdom that, by the witness of Solomon, is more precious than all riches;[1284] the gems of ecclesiastical virtues are scattered to enrich and adorn your mind forever, and you do not come running, do not snatch what is thrown, especially when the condition for the gatherers is better here than there. There what another has grabbed before you cannot be yours; here each one, if he so desires, can have in its entirety the gift that is thrown out in common. Another's gain does not become your loss, but each one's gain becomes everyone's joy. We see that people come running in great numbers with extraordinary eagerness if some peddler sets up a table and promises skill in removing stains set in garments or remedies for toothaches, inflammation of the eyes, and quartan fever; and we are reluctant to listen to someone who shows how to wash out stains from the mind, to drive away greed, immodesty, insane love, hatred, and envy, threatening afflictions of the mind. St Paul inveighs against those who dined in an unbecoming manner in the assembly of Christians, scorning the church of God, and asks them whether they do not have homes where they may eat as they choose and drink even to intoxication if they like.[1285] I think that he would inveigh still more sternly if he saw our sermons and would exclaim, 'Why do you thus scorn the church of God?' If it pleases you to belch out your hangover, to sleep off your drunkenness, a private home and bedroom are more suited for that than a church. If you have decided to relax, there are ball courts where that can be done without insulting the church; if it pleases you to trifle, there are barbershops, markets, and porticoes where those things are done, I shall not say becomingly (for what is foolish is nowhere becoming), but at least less disgracefully. When invited to dinner you prepare yourself according to the rank of your host, you ready your appetite so as not to appear a fussy guest, and you encourage your host with much civility since he has expended money and effort to provide you with an elegant dinner; and do you sadden with your indifference and your nausea the one who feeds your mind with heavenly bread, who passes you wine that gladdens the heart? What is the source of this perverse estimation of things in us? At least we should have proceeded from lowest to loftier. A courier comes to a town saying that he has been sent, I shall not say now from the emperor, but from some governor; he receives a respectful hearing, not because of his own merits but

* * * * *

1284 Prov 3:15
1285 1 Cor 11:22

because of the authority of the one who sends him: and is the preacher, the representative of God, despised, thus causing an affront to the one who sends him? Do not judge according to appearance.[1286] The person who is speaking is a man like you; but God is speaking to you through his mouth, and he is speaking God's words, not his own. The person who is teaching about Christ therefore deserves to have you hear him as Christ. You heed a man sent by a man reciting edicts that burden you and reduce your possessions; and do you not heed someone who expounds the commands of God that make you blessed? If it is right to venerate in an ambassador the person of whoever sends him, nothing is more exalted than God; if it is right to receive with applause and favour what is said to our benefit, nothing is more excellent than the salvation of souls, nothing more gracious than the gospel. You listen carefully to someone who professes how a field, the nourisher of your body, should be cultivated, and do you not heed someone who teaches how the mind, which bears the fruit of eternal happiness, should be cultivated? In order to recover from a disease of the body you offer attentive ears to a physician, who will demand a reward for his bitter remedies; and are you loath to hear someone who at no cost treats diseases of the soul with agreeable words? Moreover, who of us does not have his soul torn by many wounds or does not suffer under many deadly diseases? Or, if he is not suffering, it is at least a risk shared by us all. It is best to learn from a physician how a disease is to be avoided before you catch it; whatever sins mankind has ever committed can befall you. And so if the laity consider how great is the dignity of the preacher, how laborious and how dangerous a task he performs, whose place he is taking, the business he is conducting, the great benefits he brings, how sublime his teachings, how magnificent his promises, they will of course venerate him more reverently and listen to him more carefully and obey him more willingly. If any human weakness in him gives offence, he must not at once be scorned insolently but rather supported humanely. How, you will say, is he to be supported? If you listen cheerfully to his teaching, listen patiently to his criticism, if you retain what he has taught, if you correct what he has rebuked, if under his teaching you turn out every day better than yourself. By these goads, as it were, he will be stimulated to become more vigilant in his study of Holy Writ, more ardent in his teaching, more frank in his admonition. In fact, he should be supported by everyone's prayers. God must be implored to bestow better things every day upon his flock through

* * * * *

1286 John 7:24; 2 Cor 10:7

his ambassador. When the people pray for this, they pray on their own behalf, and because they ask in the name of Jesus, God will not show himself deaf to such prayers.[1287] The preacher in turn prays that the spirit of Christ may render everyone's mind susceptible to teaching and prepare the ground so that the good seed cast may produce a successful crop.[1288] The Lord exclaims through Jeremiah, 'Break up your fallow ground, men of Judah and of Jerusalem, and do not sow upon thorns; circumcise yourselves to the Lord and remove the foreskin of your hearts.'[1289] The men of Judah are all those who confess and acknowledge their own unrighteousness; the men of Jerusalem are all those who persevere in the Catholic church, pursue the side of peace towards God and towards their neighbour alike, for only these can be taught the evangelical philosophy. Someone who does not acknowledge his own disease cannot be treated by the physician's art, and 'if someone is contentious, we have no such a custom,'[1290] says the Apostle. New teaching loves new fields, sober loves sober minds, pure loves pure minds. Cut out the thorns of earthly cares, uproot the useless stalks of evil desires, tear out the burrs, thistles, briars, and whatever harmful emotions have taken hold of your mind; thus will you prepare a good field for good seed: 'Circumcise the foreskin of your heart, cutting away pleasures, luxury, and delights.'[1291] The Holy Spirit urges likewise through Hosea, saying, 'Sow for yourselves in righteousness and harvest in mercy; break up your fallow field. It is time moreover to seek the Lord, who will teach you righteousness when he comes.'[1292] He who thirsts for righteousness[1293] sows in righteousness; he who achieves what he thirsts for, not by his own strength but by the Lord's kindness, harvests in mercy; he who prepares his heart for the teaching of the gospel breaks up his fallow field for himself. For this is the new wine that the Lord does not want to be put into old wineskins;[1294] this is the new patch that fits badly on the old robe.[1295] I think that I have given each side admonition enough; but if each performs its duty – the preacher by dispensing the treasures of his Lord in good faith, carefully,

* * * * *

1287 John 14:13, 15:16, 16:23 and 26
1288 Matt 13:27, 37, 38
1289 Jer 4:3–4
1290 1 Cor 11:16. See *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* (11.16) ASD VI-8 224:221–4; see also JBC II 270 (51:69).
1291 Deut 10:16; Jer 4:4
1292 Hos 10:12
1293 Cf Matt 5:6.
1294 Matt 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37–8
1295 Matt 9:16; Mark 2:21; Luke 5:36

eagerly, lovingly, unbendingly, the congregation by receiving the gifts with devout and eager minds – there is no doubt that that heavenly farmer will give a rich and abundant increase.

And so we have included in this volume what seemed to need saying about the dignity, the difficulty, the purity, the courage, the usefulness, and the reward of the faithful preacher; since it has grown large enough, we shall reserve the rest for the next book.

This page intentionally left blank

WORKS FREQUENTLY CITED

SHORT-TITLE FORMS FOR ERASMUS' WORKS

This page intentionally left blank

WORKS FREQUENTLY CITED

This list provides bibliographical information for the publications referred to in short-title form in introductions and notes. For Erasmus' writings see the short-title list following.

ACW	*Ancient Christian Writers*: *The Works of the Fathers in Translation* ed Johannes Quaesten and Walter J. Burghardt (New York 1946–)
Alan of Lille	Alan of Lille *The Art of Preaching* [*Summa de arte praedicatoria*] trans Gillian R. Evans, Cistercian Studies Series 23 (Kalamazoo 1981)
Allen	*Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami* ed P.S Allen, H.M. Allen, and H.W. Garrod (Oxford 1906–58) 11 vols and index vol by B. Flower and E. Rosenbaum (Oxford 1958).
Anal. hymenica	*Analecta hymenica medii aevi* ed Guido Maria Dreves and Clemens Blume (Leipzig 1886–1922; repr New York 1961)
ANF	*The Ante-Nicene Fathers* ed Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Buffalo 1886–96; Peabody, Mass repr 1994) 10 vols
ASD	*Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami* (Amsterdam 1969–)
Augustine	Saint Augustine *On Christian Doctrine* trans D.W. Robertson (New York 1958)
Augustine	*Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* ed Allan D. Fitzgerald (Grand Rapids, Mich 1999)
Augustijn *Erasmus*	Cornelis Augustijn *Erasmus: His Life, Works, and Influence* trans J.C. Grayson (Toronto 1991)
Augustijn 'Reformation'	'Erasmus und die Reformation in der Schweiz' *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 86 (1986) 27–42
AV	*The Holy Bible . . . Authorized King James Version* (London 1611; repr 1969)
Béné *Érasme*	Charles Béné *Érasme et saint Augustin ou influence de saint Augustin sur l'humanisme d'Érasme* (Geneva 1969)
Bentley *Humanists*	Jerry H. Bentley *Humanists and Holy Writ: New Testament Scholarship in the Renaissance* (Princeton 1983)

Biblical Humanism	*Biblical Humanism and Scholasticism in the Age of Erasmus* ed Erika Rummel (Leiden 2008)
Bibliotheca sanctorum	*Bibliotheca sanctorum* (Rome 1961–70)
Black	Robert Black *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy: Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge c 2001)
Bowersock *Late Antiquity*	*Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World* ed G.W. Bowersock, Peter Brown, and Oleg Grabar (Cambridge, Mass 1999)
Caplan	Harry Caplan 'Classical Rhetoric and the Mediaeval Theory of Preaching' *Classical Philology* 28 (1933) 73–96
CCSL	*Corpus christianorum, series Latina* (Turnhout 1954–)
CCCM	*Corpus christianorum, continuatio mediaevalis* (Turnhout 1966–)
CEBR	*Contemporaries of Erasmus: A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation* ed Peter G. Bietenholz and Thomas B. Deutscher (Toronto 1985–7) 3 vols
CHB	*Cambridge History of the Bible*: I *From the Beginnings to Jerome* ed P.R. Ackroyd and C.F. Evans (Cambridge 1970); II *The West from the Fathers to the Reformation* ed G.W.H. Lampe (Cambridge 1969); III *The West from the Reformation to the Present Day* ed S.L. Greenslade (Cambridge 1963)
Chantraine	Georges Chantraine *'Mystère' et 'philosophie du Christ' selon Érasme: étude de la lettre à P. Volz et de la 'Ratio verae theologiae' (1518)* (Namur 1971)
Chomarat 'Grammar and Rhetoric'	Jacques Chomarat 'Grammar and Rhetoric in the Paraphrases of the Gospels by Erasmus' ERSY 1 (1981) 30–69
Chomarat *Grammaire*	Jacques Chomarat *Grammaire et rhétorique chez Erasme* (Paris 1981) 2 vols
Chomarat 'Introduction'	Jacques Chomarat 'Introduction' in ASD V-4 (Amsterdam 1991) 3–28
CIC	*Codex iuris canonici*
Classical Tradition	*The Classical Tradition* ed Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most, and Salvatore Settis (Cambridge, Mass 2010)

Clavasio	Angelus de Clavasio *Summa angelica* (Lyon: J. de Cambray 1523)
CLCLT	Library of Latin texts (online) [CLCLT = CETEDOC] (Turnhout 2005–)
Colloquia Erasmiana	*Colloquia Erasmiana Turonensia: douzième stage international d'études humanistes, Tours 1969* ed Jean Claude Margolin (Toronto 1972–) 2 vols
Concilium Tridentinum	*Concilium Tridentinum: diariorum, actorum, epistularum, tractatuum nova collectio* ed Societas Goerresiana (Freiburg im Breisgau 1901–2001) 13 vols
CPG	*Clavis patrum Graecorum* ed Maurice Geerard (Turnhout 1974–87) 5 vols
CPL	*Clavis patrum Latinorum* ed Eligius Dekkers (Steenbrugis 1995)
Crichton	J.D. Crichton *The Ministry of Reconciliation* (London and Dublin 1974)
CSEL	*Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (Vienna 1866–)
CWE	*Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto 1974–)
de Lubac *Medieval Exegesis*	Henri de Lubac *Medieval Exegesis* I: *The Four Senses of Scripture* trans Mark Sebanc (Grand Rapids, Mich and Edinburgh 1998); and idem II trans E. M. Macierowski (Grand Rapids, Mich and Edinburgh 2000)
Denzinger	*Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* ed H.D. Denzinger and A. Schönmetzer 33rd ed (Barcelona 1965)
DMA	*Dictionary of the Middle Ages* ed Joseph R. Strayer (New York c 1982–c 1989) 13 vols, 1 Supplement
DS	*Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique: doctrine et histoire* ed Marcel Viller, F. Cavallera, J. de Guibert (Paris 1937–95) 17 vols
DV	Douay-Rheims Version (Bible)
ER	*Encyclopedia of the Renaissance* ed Paul F. Grendler (New York 1999) 6 vols

ERSY	*Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook*
Escobar	Andreas de Escobar *Modus confitendi* (n p c 1520) British Library C 32 a 39 [8]
Exomologesis 1524	Erasmus of Rotterdam *Exomologesis sive Modus confitendi, per Erasmum Roterodamum, opus nunc primum & natum & excusum cum aliis lectu dignis, quorum catalogum reperies in proxima pagella* (Basel: Ioannes Froben 1524)
Exomologesis 1530	Erasmus of Rotterdam *Exomologesis, per Des. Erasmum Roterodamum recognita diligenter & aucta . . .* (Basel: Froben 1530)
FOC	*The Fathers of the Church* (Washington, DC 1947–) 127 vols
Francis of Assisi	*Francis of Assisi: Early Documents* I ed Regis J. Armstrong et al (New York 1999)
Fumaroli	Marc Fumaroli *L'Age de l'éloquence: rhétorique et 'res literaria' de la Renaissance au seuil de l'époque classique* 3rd ed (Geneva 2002)
Gabbay	*Handbook of the History of Logic* II: *Mediaeval and Renaissance Logic* ed Dov M. Gabbay and John Woods 1st ed (Amsterdam and Boston 2004–)
GCS	*Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte* (Leipzig 1897–1969) 53 vols
Gilson 'Michel Menot'	Étienne Gilson 'Michel Menot et la technique du sermon médiéval' in *Les Idées et les Lettres* (Paris 1932) 93–154
Godin	André Godin *Erasme, lecteur d'Origène* Travaux d'humanisme et Renaissance 190 (Geneva 1982)
Godin *Spiritualité*	André Godin *Spiritualité franciscaine en Flandre au XVIe siècle: l'homélaire de Jean Vitrier. Texte, étude thématique et sémantique* preface by Alphonse Dupront (Geneva 1971)
Gogan	Brian Gogan 'The Ecclesiology of Erasmus of Rotterdam: A Genetic Account' *Heythrop Journal* 21/1 (1980) 393–411
Grendler (1)	Paul Grendler *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300–1600* (Baltimore c 1989)
Grendler (2)	Paul Grendler *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore 2002)

Grillmeier	Aloys Grillmeier *Christ in Christian Tradition* trans John Bowden 2nd rev ed (Atlanta 1975) I *From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*; idem II *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604)*; Part 2: *The Church of Constantinople in the sixth century* trans John Cawte and Pauline Allen (London and Louisville 1995)
Grünwald	Michael Grünwald 'Der "Ecclesiastes" des Erasmus von Rotterdam: Reform der Predigt durch Erneuerung des Predigers' (Diss. University of Innsbruck 1969)
Halkin	Léon-E. Halkin *Erasmus: A Critical Biography* (Oxford 1993)
Hirsch	Rudolf Hirsch 'Surgant's List of Recommended Books for Preachers (1502–1503)' *Renaissance Quarterly* 20 (1967) 199–210
Hoffmann *Rhetoric*	Manfred Hoffmann *Rhetoric and Theology: The Hermeneutic of Erasmus* (Toronto 1994)
Holborn	Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus *Ausgewählte Werke* ed Hajo Holborn with Annemarie Holborn (Munich 1933; repr 1964)
JBC	*The Jerome Biblical Commentary* ed Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy (Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1968) 2 vols
Jedin	*Handbook of Church History* ed Hubert Jedin and John Dolan ([New York] [1965–70]) I, III, IV; *History of the Church* ed Hubert Jedin and John Dolan (New York 1980–2) II, V–X
Jungmann	Joseph A. Jungmann *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development* (*Missarum Sollemnia*) trans Francis A. Brunner (Westminster, Md 1986) 2 vols
Kaster *Guardians*	Robert A. Kaster *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley 1988)
Kennedy	George Kennedy *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World, 300 B.C.–A.D. 300* (Princeton 1972)
Kilcoyne and Jennings	Francis P. Kilcoyne and Margaret Jennings 'Rethinking "continuity": Erasmus' *Ecclesiastes* and the *Artes praedicandi*' in *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* N S 21/4 (1997) 5–24

Kleinhans	Robert G. Kleinhans 'Erasmus' Doctrine of Preaching, a Study of "Ecclesiastes Sive de Ratione Concionandi" ' (diss. Princeton Theological Seminary 1968)
Lampe	G.W.H. Lampe *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford 1961)
Lausberg	Heinrich Lausberg *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study* ed David E. Orton and R. Dean Anderson, foreword by George A. Kennedy (Leiden 1998)
LB	Erasmus *Opera omnia* ed Jean Leclerc (Leiden 1703–6; repr Hildesheim 1961–2) 10 vols
Legenda aurea	Jacobus de Voragine *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints* trans William Granger Ryan (Princeton 1993)
L&S	Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford 1962)
LSJ	Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott *A Greek-English Lexicon* 9th ed (Oxford 1990)
LW	*Luther's Works* (American Edition) ed Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia and St Louis 1955–86) 55 vols
LXX	*Septuaginta* ed Alfred Rahlfs (Stuttgart 1935; 1979) 2 vols in one
Mack	Peter Mack *Renaissance Argument: Valla and Agricola in the Traditions of Rhetoric and Dialectic* (Leiden 1993)
Mack *Renaissance Rhetoric*	Peter Mack *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric 1380–1620* (Oxford and New York 2012)
Manifesta mendacia	*Manifest Lies* trans Erika Rummel CWE 71 115–31
Mansi	Giovanni Domenico Mansi *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* (Florence and Venice: Antonius Zatta 1758–98; repr Graz 1960–2) 54 vols in 59
McConica 'Grammar of Consent'	James K. McConica 'Erasmus and the Grammar of Consent' in *Scrinium* II 77–99
McGinness 'Erasmian Legacy'	Frederick J. McGinness 'An Erasmian Legacy: Ecclesiastes and the Reform of Preaching at Trent' in *Heresy, Culture and Religion in Early Modern Italy* ed Ronald K. Delph, Michelle M. Fontaine, John Jeffries Martin (Kirksville, Mo 2006) 93–112

McGinness *Right Thinking*	Frederick J. McGinness *Right Thinking and Sacred Oratory in Counter-Reformation Rome* (Princeton 1995)
McNeil	J.T. McNeil and H.M. Gamer *Medieval Handbooks of Penance* (New York 1938)
Methodus	*Ratio seu Methodus compendio perveniendi ad veram theologiam* in Holborn 150–62
Minnich	Nelson H. Minnich 'Erasmus and the Fifth Lateran Council (1512–17)' in *Erasmus of Rotterdam: The Man and the Scholar* ed J. Sperna Weiland and W.Th.M. Frijhoff (Leiden 1988) 46–60
Murphy *Incunabula*	James J. Murphy *Incunabula: The Printing Revolution in Europe 1455–1500. A Guide to Units Twenty-two and Twenty-three of the Microfiche Collection. Incunabula Units 22 & 23: Rhetoric Incunabula: Parts I & II* (Woodbridge, Conn 1998)
Murphy *Rhetoric*	James J. Murphy *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley 1974)
Myers 'Humanism'	W. David Myers 'Humanism and Confession in Northern Europe in the Age of Clement VII' in *The Pontificate of Clement VII: History, Politics, Culture* ed Kenneth Gouwens and Sheryl E. Reiss (Aldershot and Burlington, Vt 2005) 363–83
Myers *Sinning*	W. David Myers *'Poor Sinning Folk': Confession and Conscience in Counter-Reformation Germany* (Ithaca and London 1996)
Nazianzus	St Gregory of Nazianzus *On God and Christ: The Five Theological Orations and Two Letters of Cledonius* ed Frederick J. Williams and Lionel R. Wickham (Crestwood, NY 2002)
NCE	*The New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York 1967–79) 17 vols
Nestle-Aland	Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* 27th ed (Stuttgart 2001)
Noonan *Church Visible*	James-Charles Noonan Jr *The Church Visible: The Ceremonial Life and Protocol of the Roman Catholic Church* (New York 1999)
NPNF	*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* series II (= NPPF series II)
NRSV	*The Holy Bible New Revised Standard Version* (New York 1989)

OCD	*The Oxford Classical Dictionary* ed N.G.L. Hammond et al 2nd ed (Oxford repr 1984)
ODB	*The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (New York and Oxford 1991) 3 vols
ODCC	F.L. Cross *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* ed E.A. Livingstone 3rd ed (Oxford 1997)
ODS	*The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* ed David Hugh Farmer 5th ed (Oxford 2003)
OED	*The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary: Complete Text Reproduced Micrographically* (Oxford 1971) 2 vols
OLD	*Oxford Latin Dictionary* ed P.G.W. Glare 2nd ed (Oxford 2012) 2 vols
Olin	John C. Olin *Christian Humanism and the Reformation: Desiderius Erasmus, Selected Writings* (New York 1965)
Olin *Catholic Reformation*	John C. Olin *The Catholic Reformation: Savonarola to Ignatius Loyola* (New York 1969)
O'Malley 'Content'	John W. O'Malley 'Content and Rhetorical Forms in Sixteenth-Century Treatises on Preaching' in *Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric* ed James J. Murphy (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1983) 238–52
O'Malley 'Grammar'	John W. O'Malley 'Grammar and Rhetoric in the *Pietas* of Erasmus' *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 19 (1988) 81–98
O'Malley *Praise and Blame*	John W. O'Malley *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450–1521* Duke Monographs in Medieval and Renaissance Studies 3 (Durham 1979)
O'Malley 'Sacred Rhetoric'	John W. O'Malley 'Erasmus and the History of Sacred Rhetoric: The *Ecclesiastes* of 1535' ERSY 5 (1985) 1–29
Origenes Werke	*Origenes Werke: Homilien zum Hexateuch in Rufins Übersetzung* part 1: *Die Homilien zu Genesis, Exodus und Leviticus* ed W. Baehrens GCS 29 (Leipzig 1920)
Opuscula	Erasmus *Erasmi Opuscula: A Supplement to the Opera Omnia* ed Wallace K. Ferguson (The Hague 1933)

Otto	A. Otto *Die Sprichwörter und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der Römer, gesammelt und erklärt von A. Otto* (Leipzig 1890; repr Hildesheim and New York 1988)
Pabel	*Erasmus' Vision of the Church* ed Hilmar M. Pabel, Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies 33 (Kirksville, Mo 1995)
Parole du prédicateur	*Parole du prédicateur ve–xve siècle* ed Rosa Maria Dessì and Michel Lauwers, Collection du Centre d'études médiévales de Nice (Nice 1997)
Pastor	Ludwig Pastor (Freiherr von) *The History of the Popes, From the Close of the Middle Ages* ed Frederick Ignatius Antrobus (London 1923) 40 vols
Payne (1)	John B. Payne *Erasmus: His Theology of the Sacraments* (Richmond 1970)
Payne (2)	John B. Payne 'The Hermeneutics of Erasmus' in *Scrinium* II 13–49
PG	*Patrologiae cursus completus ... series Graeca* ed J.P. Migne (Paris 1857–1912) 162 vols
PL	*Patrologiae cursus completus ... series Latina* ed J.P. Migne (Paris 1844–1902) 221 vols
Poeniteas cito	[?Peter of Blois] *De poenitentia* PL 207 1153–6
Porter 'Fisher and Erasmus'	H.C. Porter 'Fisher and Erasmus' in *Humanism, Reform and the Reformation: The Career of Bishop John Fisher* ed Brendan Bradshaw and Eamon Duffy (Cambridge 1989) 81–102
Pseudo-Dionysius *The Celestial Hierarchies*	Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite *The Celestial Hierarchies* 15 (London 1935)
Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names*	Pseudo-Dionysius (the Areopagite) *The Divine Names and the Mystical Theology* trans John D. Jones (Milwaukee 1999)
Quintilian	Marcus Fabius Quintilianus *Institutio oratoria*
Rabil	Albert J. Rabil Jr *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms and Legacy* (Philadelphia 1988) 3 vols
Rahner	Karl Rahner 'Forgotten Truths Concerning the Sacrament of Penance' in *Theological Investigations* II trans K.H. Kruger (Baltimore and London 1963) 135–74

Ratio	*Ratio seu compendium verae theologiae per Des. Erasmum Roterodamum* in Holborn 175–305
Reedijk	Cornelis Reedijk 'Das Lebensende des Erasmus' *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 57 (1958) 23–66
Reeve and Screech (1)	*Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament: Acts, Romans,* I *and* II *Corinthians: Facsimile of the Final Latin Text with All Earlier Variants* ed Anne Reeve and M.A. Screech, Studies in the History of Christian Thought 42 (Leiden 1990)
Reeve and Screech (2)	*Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament: Galatians to the Apocalypse: Facsimile of the Final Latin Text with All Earlier Variants* ed Anne Reeve, introduction by M.A. Screech, Studies in the History of Christian Thought 52 (Leiden 1993)
Rhenanus	Beatus Rhenanus *The Life of Erasmus* (in Olin)
Rosemondt	Godschalk Rosemondt *Confessionale* (Antwerp: M. Hillen 1518)
RSV	*The Holy Bible Revised Standard Version* (New York 1974)
Rummel *Catholic Critics*	Erika Rummel *Erasmus and his Catholic Critics* Bibliotheca humanistica & reformatorica 45 (Nieuwkoop 1989) 2 vols
Rummel *Monachatus*	Erika Rummel '*Monachatus Non Est Pietas*: Interpretations and Misinterpretations of a Dictum' in Pabel 41–55
SC	*Sources chrétiennes* ed H. de Lubac and J. Daniélou (Paris 1941–) 564 vols
Schneyer	Johann Baptist Schneyer *Geschichte der katholischen Predigt* (Freiburg c 1969)
Schoeck (1)	R.J. Schoeck *Erasmus of Europe: The Making of a Humanist, 1467–1500* (Savage, Md 1990)
Schoeck (2)	R.J. Schoeck *Erasmus of Europe: The Prince of Humanists, 1501–1536* (Edinburgh 1993)
Scrinium	*Scrinium Erasmianum* ed J. Coppens 2nd ed (Leiden 1969) 2 vols
Seidel Menchi *Erasmus als Ketzer*	Silvana Seidel Menchi *Erasmus als Ketzer: Reformation und Inquisition im Italien des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Leiden 1993)

Sozomen	*The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen* trans E. Walford NPNF series II (Peabody, Mass 1994) 2 179–427
Spykman	Gordon J. Spykman *Attrition and Contrition at the Council of Trent* (Amsterdam 1955)
Stupperich	Robert Stupperich 'Erasmus und die kirchlichen Autoritäten' *Annuarium historiae conciliorum* 8 (1976) 346–64
Tanner	*Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* ed N.P. Tanner (London and Washington 1990) 2 vols
Taylor *Soldiers*	Larissa Taylor *Soldiers of Christ: Preaching in Late Medieval and Reformation France* (New York 1992)
Tentler 'Forgiveness'	Thomas N. Tentler 'Forgiveness and Consolation in the Religious Thought of Erasmus' *Studies in the Renaissance* 12 (1965) 110–33
Tentler *Sin*	Thomas N. Tentler *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Renaissance* (Princeton 1977)
Thomas à Kempis	Thomas à Kempis *Thomae Hemerken a Kempis Opera omnia* ed Michael Iosephus Pohl (Freiburg im Breisgau 1902–22) 7 vols
Thompson 'Better Teachers'	Craig R. Thompson 'Better Teachers than Scotus or Aquinas' in *Medieval and Renaissance Studies: Proceedings of the Southeastern Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Summer, 1966* ed John L. Lievsay, Medieval and Renaissance Series 2 (Durham, NC c 1968) 114–45
Thompson 'Return'	Craig R. Thompson 'The Return to Basel' CWE 40 1122–36
TLG	*Thesaurus Linguae Graecae: Canon of Greek Authors and Works* ed Luci Berkowitz and Karl A. Squitier 3rd ed (New York and Oxford 1990)
Tracy (1)	James D. Tracy *Erasmus of the Low Countries* (Berkeley 1996)
Tracy (2)	James D. Tracy *Erasmus: The Growth of a Mind* (Geneva 1972)
Vita sancti Ambrosii	Paulinus of Milan *Vita sancti Ambrosii* trans Sister Mary Simplicia Kaniecka (Washington, DC 1928)

Vogel	C.J. de Vogel 'Erasmus and His Attitude towards Church Dogma' in *Scrinium* II 101–32
Vulg	*Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem* ed Robertus Weber et al 4th ed (Stuttgart 1994)
Walther and Schmidt	*Proverbia sententiaeque Latinitatis medii ac recentioris aevi: Lateinische Sprichtwörter und Sentenzen des Mittelalters unter frühen Neuzeit in alphabetischer Anordnung aus dem Nachlass von Hans Walther* ed Paul Gerhard Schmidt, n s (Göttingen 1982–6) 3 vols
Wengert	Timothy Wengert 'Famous Last Words: The Final Epistolary Exchange between Erasmus of Rotterdam and Philip Melanchthon (1536)' ERSY 25 (2005) 18–38
Wenzel 'Preaching'	Siegfried Wenzel 'Preaching the Seven Deadly Sins' in *In the Garden of Evil: The Vices and Culture in the Middle Ages* ed Richard Newhauser (Toronto 2005) 145–69
Witt *Footsteps*	Ronald G. Witt *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden 2000)
Wolfs	S.P. Wolfs 'Erasmus von Rotterdam und die Dominikaner zu Löwen' in *Xenia medii aevi historiam illustrantia oblata Thomae Kaeppeli O.P.* ed Raymundus Creytens and Pius Künzle (Rome 1978) 787–808
WSA	*The Works of Saint Augustine, A Translation for the 21st Century* (Hyde Park, NY 2000–)

SHORT-TITLE FORMS FOR ERASMUS' WORKS

Titles following colons are longer versions of the short-titles, or are alternative titles. Items entirely enclosed in square brackets are of doubtful authorship. For abbreviations see Works Frequently Cited.

Acta: Acta Academiae Lovaniensis contra Lutherum *Opuscula* / CWE 71
Adagia: Adagiorum chiliades 1508, etc (Adagiorum collectanea for the primitive form, when required) LB II / ASD II-1–9 / CWE 30–6
Admonitio adversus mendacium: Admonitio adversus mendacium et obtrectationem LB X / CWE 78
Annotationes in Novum Testamentum LB VI / ASD VI-5–10 / CWE 51–60
Antibarbari LB X / ASD I-1 / CWE 23
Apologia ad annotationes Stunicae: Apologia respondens ad ea quae Iacobus Lopis Stunica taxaverat in prima duntaxat Novi Testamenti aeditione LB IX / ASD IX-2
Apologia ad Caranzam: Apologia ad Sanctium Caranzam, or Apologia de tribus locis, or Responsio ad annotationem Stunicae . . . a Sanctio Caranza defensam LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia ad Fabrum: Apologia ad Iacobum Fabrum Stapulensem LB IX / ASD IX-3 / CWE 83
Apologia ad prodromon Stunicae LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia ad Stunicae conclusiones LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia adversus monachos: Apologia adversus monachos quosdam Hispanos LB IX
Apologia adversus Petrum Sutorem: Apologia adversus debacchationes Petri Sutoris LB IX
Apologia adversus rhapsodias Alberti Pii: Apologia ad viginti et quattuor libros A. Pii LB IX / ASD IX-6 / CWE 84
Apologia adversus Stunicae Blasphemiae: Apologia adversus libellum Stunicae cui titulum fecit Blasphemiae et impietates Erasmi LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia contra Latomi dialogum: Apologia contra Iacobi Latomi dialogum de tribus linguis LB IX / CWE 71
Apologia de 'In principio erat sermo': Apologia palam refellens quorundam seditiosos clamores apud populum ac magnates quod in evangelio Ioannis verterit 'In principio erat sermo' (1520a); Apologia de 'In principio erat sermo' (1520b) LB IX / CWE 73
Apologia de laude matrimonii: Apologia pro declamatione de laude matrimonii LB IX / CWE 71
Apologia de loco 'Omnes quidem': Apologia de loco taxato in publica professione per Nicolaum Ecmondanum theologum et Carmelitanum Lovanii 'Omnes quidem resurgemus' LB IX / CWE 73
Apologia qua respondet invectivis Lei: Apologia qua respondet duabus invectivis Eduardi Lei *Opuscula* / ASD IX-4 / CWE 72
Apophthegmata LB IV / ASD IV-4 / CWE 37–8
Appendix de scriptis Clithovei LB IX / CWE 83
Appendix respondens ad Sutorem: Appendix respondens ad quaedam Antapologiae Petri Sutoris LB IX
Argumenta: Argumenta in omnes epistolas apostolicas nova (with Paraphrases)
Axiomata pro causa Lutheri: Axiomata pro causa Martini Lutheri *Opuscula* / CWE 71

Brevissima scholia: In Elenchum Alberti Pii brevissima scholia per eundem Erasmum Roterodamum ASD IX-6 / CWE 84

Carmina LB I, IV, V, VIII / ASD I-7 / CWE 85–6
Catalogus lucubrationum LB I / CWE 9 (Ep 1341A)
Ciceronianus: Dialogus Ciceronianus LB I / ASD I-2 / CWE 28
Colloquia LB I / ASD I-3 / CWE 39–40
Compendium vitae Allen I / CWE 4
Conflictus: Conflictus Thaliae et Barbariei LB I / ASD I-8
[Consilium: Consilium cuiusdam ex animo cupientis esse consultum] *Opuscula* / CWE 71

De bello Turcico: Utilissima consultatio de bello Turcis inferendo, et obiter enarratus psalmus 28 LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 64
De civilitate: De civilitate morum puerilium LB I / ASD I-8 / CWE 25
Declamatio de morte LB IV
Declamatiuncula LB IV
Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas: Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas sub nomine facultatis theologiae Parisiensis LB IX / ASD IX-7 / CWE 82
De concordia: De sarcienda ecclesiae concordia, or De amabili ecclesiae concordia [on Psalm 83] LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 65
De conscribendis epistolis LB I / ASD I-2 / CWE 25
De constructione: De constructione octo partium orationis, or Syntaxis LB I / ASD I-4
De contemptu mundi: Epistola de contemptu mundi LB V / ASD V-1 / CWE 66
De copia: De duplici copia verborum ac rerum LB I / ASD I-6 / CWE 24
De esu carnium: Epistola apologetica ad Christophorum episcopum Basiliensem de interdicto esu carnium (published with scholia in a 1532 edition but not in the 1540 Opera) LB IX / ASD IX-1 / CWE 73
De immensa Dei misericordia: Concio de immensa Dei misericordia LB V / ASD V-7 / CWE 70
De libero arbitrio: De libero arbitrio diatribe LB IX / CWE 76
De philosophia evangelica LB VI
De praeparatione: De praeparatione ad mortem LB V / ASD V-1 / CWE 70
De pueris instituendis: De pueris statim ac liberaliter instituendis LB I / ASD I-2 / CWE 26
De puero Iesu: Concio de puero Iesu LB V / ASD V-7 / CWE 29
De puritate tabernaculi: Enarratio psalmi 14 qui est de puritate tabernaculi sive ecclesiae christianae LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 65
De ratione studii LB I / ASD I-2 / CWE 24
De recta pronuntiatione: De recta latini graecique sermonis pronuntiatione LB I / ASD I-4 / CWE 26
De taedio Iesu: Disputatiuncula de taedio, pavore, tristicia Iesu LB V / ASD V-7 / CWE 70
Detectio praestigiarum: Detectio praestigiarum cuiusdam libelli Germanice scripti LB X / ASD IX-1 / CWE 78
De vidua christiana LB V / ASD V-6 / CWE 66
De virtute amplectenda: Oratio de virtute amplectenda LB V / CWE 29
[Dialogus bilinguium ac trilinguium: Chonradi Nastadiensis dialogus bilinguium ac trilinguium] *Opuscula* / CWE 7

Dilutio: Dilutio eorum quae Iodocus Clithoveus scripsit adversus declamationem suasoriam matrimonii / *Dilutio eorum quae Iodocus Clithoveus scripsit* ed Émile V. Telle (Paris 1968) / CWE 83
Divinationes ad notata Bedae: Divinationes ad notata per Bedam de Paraphrasi Erasmi in Matthaeum, et primo de duabus praemissis epistolis LB IX / ASD IX-5

Ecclesiastes: Ecclesiastes sive de ratione concionandi LB V / ASD V-4–5 / CWE 67–8
Elenchus in censuras Bedae: In N. Bedae censuras erroneas elenchus LB IX / ASD IX-5
Enchiridion: Enchiridion militis christiani LB V / CWE 66
Encomium matrimonii (in De conscribendis epistolis)
Encomium medicinae: Declamatio in laudem artis medicae LB I / ASD I-4 / CWE 29
Epistola ad Dorpium LB IX / CWE 3 (Ep 337) / CWE 71
Epistola ad fratres Inferioris Germaniae: Responsio ad fratres Germaniae Inferioris ad epistolam apologeticam incerto autore proditam LB X / ASD IX-1 / CWE 78
Epistola ad gracculos: Epistola ad quosdam impudentissimos gracculos LB X / Ep 2275
Epistola apologetica adversus Stunicam LB IX / ASD IX-8 / ASD-8 / Ep 2172
Epistola apologetica de Termino LB X / Ep 2018
Epistola consolatoria: Epistola consolatoria virginibus sacris, or Epistola consolatoria in adversis LB V / CWE 69
Epistola contra pseudevangelicos: Epistola contra quosdam qui se falso iactant evangelicos LB X / ASD IX-1 / CWE 78
Euripidis Hecuba LB I / ASD I-1
Euripidis Iphigenia in Aulide LB I / ASD I-1
Exomologesis: Exomologesis sive modus confitendi LB V / CWE 67
Explanatio symboli: Explanatio symboli apostolorum sive catechismus LB V / ASD V-1 / CWE 70
Ex Plutarcho versa LB IV / ASD IV-2

Formula: Conficiendarum epistolarum formula (see De conscribendis epistolis)

Hyperaspistes LB X / CWE 76–7

In Nucem Ovidii commentarius LB I / ASD I-1 / CWE 29
In Prudentium: Commentarius in duos hymnos Prudentii LB V / ASD V-7 / CWE 29
In psalmum 1: Enarratio primi psalmi, 'Beatus vir,' iuxta tropologiam potissimum LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 63
In psalmum 2: Commentarius in psalmum 2, 'Quare fremuerunt gentes?' LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 63
In psalmum 3: Paraphrasis in tertium psalmum, 'Domine quid multiplicate' LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 63
In psalmum 4: In psalmum quartum concio LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 63
In psalmum 22: In psalmum 22 enarratio triplex LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 64
In psalmum 33: Enarratio psalmi 33 LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 64
In psalmum 38: Enarratio psalmi 38 LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 65
In psalmum 85: Concionalis interpretatio, plena pietatis, in psalmum 85 LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 64
Institutio christiani matrimonii LB V / ASD V-6 / CWE 69

Institutio principis christiani LB IV / ASD IV-1 / CWE 27

[Julius exclusus: Dialogus Julius exclusus e coelis] *Opuscula* ASD I-8 / CWE 27

Lingua LB IV / ASD IV-1A / CWE 29
Liturgia Virginis Matris: Virginis Matris apud Lauretum cultae liturgia LB V / ASD V-1 / CWE 69
Luciani dialogi LB I / ASD I-1

Manifesta mendacia ASD IX-4 / CWE 71
Methodus (see Ratio)
Modus orandi Deum LB V / ASD V-1 / CWE 70
Moria: Moriae encomium LB IV / ASD IV-3 / CWE 27

Notatiunculae: Notatiunculae quaedam extemporales ad naenias Bedaicas, or Responsio ad notulas Bedaicas LB IX / ASD IX-5
Novum Testamentum: Novum Testamentum 1519 and later (Novum instrumentum for the first edition, 1516, when required) LB VI / ASD VI-2, 3, 4

Obsecratio ad Virginem Mariam: Obsecratio sive oratio ad Virginem Mariam in rebus adversis, or Obsecratio ad Virginem Matrem Mariam in rebus adversis LB V / CWE 69
Oratio de pace: Oratio de pace et discordia LB VIII
Oratio funebris: Oratio funebris in funere Bertae de Heyen LB VIII / CWE 29

Paean Virgini Matri: Paean Virgini Matri dicendus LB V / CWE 69
Panegyricus: Panegyricus ad Philippum Austriae ducem LB IV / ASD IV-1 / CWE 27
Parabolae: Parabolae sive similia LB I / ASD I-5 / CWE 23
Paraclesis LB V, VI / ASD V-7
Paraphrasis in Elegantias Vallae: Paraphrasis in Elegantias Laurentii Vallae LB I / ASD I-4
Paraphrasis in Matthaeum, etc LB VII / ASD VII-6 / CWE 42–50
Peregrinatio apostolorum: Peregrinatio apostolorum Petri et Pauli LB VI, VII
Precatio ad Virginis filium Iesum LB V / CWE 69
Precatio dominica LB V / CWE 69
Precationes: Precationes aliquot novae LB V / CWE 69
Precatio pro pace ecclesiae: Precatio ad Dominum Iesum pro pace ecclesiae LB IV, V / CWE 69
Prologus supputationis: Prologus in supputationem calumniarum Natalis Bedae (1526), or Prologus supputationis errorum in censuris Bedae (1527) LB IX / ASD IX-5
Purgatio adversus epistolam Lutheri: Purgatio adversus epistolam non sobriam Lutheri LB X / ASD IX-1 / CWE 78

Querela pacis LB IV / ASD IV-2 / CWE 27

Ratio: Ratio seu Methodus compendio perveniendi ad veram theologiam (Methodus for the shorter version originally published in the Novum instrumentum of 1516) LB V, VI

Responsio ad annotationes Lei: Responsio ad annotationes Eduardi Lei LB IX / ASD IX-4 / CWE 72
Responsio ad Collationes: Responsio ad Collationes cuiusdam iuvenis gerontodidascali LB IX / CWE 73
Responsio ad disputationem de divortio: Responsio ad disputationem cuiusdam Phimostomi de divortio LB IX / ASD IX-4 / CWE 83
Responsio ad epistolam Alberti Pii: Responsio ad epistolam paraeneticam Alberti Pii, or Responsio ad exhortationem Pii LB IX / ASD IX-6 / CWE 84
Responsio ad notulas Bedaicas (*see* Notatiunculae)
Responsio ad Petri Cursii defensionem: Epistola de apologia Cursii LB X / Ep 3032
Responsio adversus febricitantis cuiusdam libellum LB X

Spongia: Spongia adversus aspergines Hutteni LB X / ASD IX-1 / CWE 78
Supputatio: Supputatio errorum in censuris Bedae LB IX
Supputationes: Supputationes errorum in censuris Natalis Bedae: contains Supputatio and reprints of Prologus supputationis; Divinationes ad notata Bedae; Elenchus in censuras Bedae; Appendix respondens ad Sutorem; Appendix de scriptis Clithovei LB IX / ASD IX-5

Tyrannicida: Tyrannicida, declamatio Lucianicae respondens LB I / ASD I-1 / CWE 29

Virginis et martyris comparatio LB V / ASD V-7 / CWE 69
Vita Hieronymi: Vita divi Hieronymi Stridonensis *Opuscula* / CWE 61

This page intentionally left blank

THE EVANGELICAL PREACHER
BOOKS TWO TO FOUR

Ecclesiastes sive de ratione concionandi

translated by

JAMES L.P. BUTRICA

annotated by

FREDERICK J. MCGINNESS

THE EVANGELICAL PREACHER
BOOK TWO

Anyone who through divine munificence possesses the traits that I mentioned in the previous book would have no great need of prolix instructions and advice, since that sincere and perfect state of mind provides of itself, even to someone who does not seek them, the eloquence suited to holy matters, as well as an appropriate delivery and seemly gestures. For it happens somehow or other that the mind's interior appearance moves into the outer man and wholly transfigures him to its own image,[1] just as hidden ailments of the blood and intestines betray themselves in the body's external state

* * * * *

1 Ambrose of Milan (born c 340, bishop 374–97) discusses this correspondence between one's interior state and one's physical appearance and external movements; modesty is the principal virtue governing this correspondence; see Ambrose *De officiis* (*Duties of the Clergy*) CCSL 15 1.18.67 1–6: 'Lovely, then, is the virtue of modesty [*verecundia*] and sweet its grace! It is seen not only in actions, but even in our words, so that we may not go beyond due measure in speech, and that our words may not have an unbecoming sound. The mirror of our mind (*speculum enim mentis*) often enough reflects its image in our words.' Ambrose emphasizes modesty's (*verecundia*) role: 'Modesty must further be guarded in our very movements and gestures and gait. For the condition of the mind is often seen in the attitude of the body [*Habitus enim mentis in corporis statu cernitur*]. For this reason the hidden man of our heart (our inner self) is considered to be either frivolous, boastful, or boisterous, or, on the other hand, steady, firm, pure, and dependable. Thus the movement of the body is a sort of voice of the soul [*vox quaedam est animi corporis motus*]. See also Ambrose *De virginitate* 2.2.7, speaking of Mary, the Mother of God: 'There was no arrogance in her eyes, no boldness in her voice, no shamelessness in her actions. Her bearing was not too faint, her gait not too loose, her voice not too sensual, so that the very appearance of her body was an image of her mind and a figure of probity [*ut ipsa corporis species simulacrum fuerit mentis et figura probitatis*].' Augustine quotes this passage in *De doctrina christiana* 4.21.48. See also Cicero *De officiis* 1.35.126–9: 'But the propriety to which I refer shows itself also in every deed, in every word, even in every movement and attitude of the body'; cf *Tusculan Disputations* 3.15.31.

(liver-sufferers are pale, the jaundiced grow black or yellow, gout-sufferers flinch with pain, sufferers from spasms and ἀποπληκτικοί [sufferers from stroke] shake); for the judgments that expert physicians make from the eyes, the face, and the body's general appearance are no less certain than those from the urine or the pulse, and the heart's emotions are not infrequently evident in a person's outer appearance. I am not speaking now of madness, of anger, of hate, of love, of modesty, fear, hope, joy, grief, and the other raw emotions that display themselves throughout the body even against our will, but also of those that are more difficult to judge because they are more hidden, such as humility or arrogance, fear or scorn towards God, indifference or love towards wealth, steadfastness or fickleness, modesty or immodesty, and finally those most spiritual of things, sincerity of faith, hope, and charity.[2] If a man's inner feelings have the power almost to make a man look utterly different, how much more will the spirit of Christ alter a man's whole appearance if it inhabits his heart? Do we not observe that the Holy Spirit, peaceful, mild, and ignorant of pretence, almost shines in the eyes and face of some persons? You could recognize that there is already at work in them the power of a divine being, which is to be completed in the resurrection, as a more powerful spirit somehow transforms the very body into itself; on the other hand, those who have simply cast aside their fear of God and given themselves over to every impiety and every sort of crime seem to display the devil in their actual physical appearance.

Accordingly, I am concerned that someone might think it foolish to mention rhetorical precepts here, since the suggestion of artistry is so detrimental to a speaker's credibility that the supreme orator[3] deems the source of art to be the concealment of art;[4] for anyone who believes that the person he is hearing is speaking artfully is wary of giving assent, since he thinks

* * * * *

2 'Faith, hope, charity' are the theological virtues, which are gifts of the Holy Spirit infused in the soul at baptism. See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I–II qq 62–7 and II–II qq 1–46; DS F4. The Council of Trent dealt with this in its decree on justification, 13 January 1547; see especially DS 1530. For the effects of one's interior life on one's external appearance, see *De puritate tabernaculi* CWE 65 247.

3 Erasmus understands Cicero as 'the supreme orator.' See book 1 15 for a discussion of concealing the art.

4 See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.7.10: 'The orator's skill conceals his art.' Erasmus still took this work to be one of Cicero's. See also Quintilian 1.11.3: 'For if an orator does command a certain art in such matters, its highest expression will be in the concealment of its existence'; see also 4.2.58. Cf Cicero *Orator* 23.78, *De inventione* 1.17.25 and 1.52.98, *De oratore* 2.41.177; Aristotle *Rhetoric* 3.2 (1404b).

that the artist is laying a trap for him, and he pays attention to observe how skilfully or how cleverly he speaks, not how helpfully. But if the observation that quite a few men who were utterly ignorant of artistry have been very eloquent leads us to accept the opinion of certain ancients who said that rhetoric was only good sense in speaking,[5] I do not see what use rhetorical instruction will bring to a preacher, since we want him to be a man outstandingly good and divinely taught and endowed with evangelical wisdom. But by the same reasoning a preacher would not have to learn dialectic,[6] an art so akin to rhetoric[7] that it is almost the same, if we believe Zeno, who showed the difference between the two by closing and extending his hand.[8] And yet no art is taught in the schools in a more precise and more serious manner than this one, though besides its fallacious subtleties and the dangerous snares of its παραlogisms,[9] it seems even to compel and to drag a man by force, as though bound in chains, to its own point of view. But who would trust a schemer, and how few would not rather be led than dragged?

But a preacher should have these skills learned rather than be learning them and have them learned rather than thoroughly learned, in order to avoid the fate of the many who, as the study becomes more attractive

* * * * *

5 'Good sense in speaking' (*dicendi prudentia*); see Cicero *Brutus* 6.23: 'Whoever devotes himself to true eloquence, devotes himself to sound thinking . . .'; cf *De oratore* 3.14.55, *De inventione* 2.53.160; Quintilian 2.20.5. See book 1 66 647–8.

6 Beside grammar and rhetoric, dialectic (or formal logic) made up the third subject of the trivium. Among the universities of northern Europe in Erasmus' day the teaching of formal logic, based upon the logical writings of Aristotle, was of the essence of theological education. See below for Erasmus' discussion of dialectic and its utility for preaching. See Grendler (2) 257–62; see especially Peter Mack *Renaissance Argument: Valla and Agricola in the Traditions of Rhetoric and Dialectic* (Leiden 1992).

7 See also Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1.1 (1354a): 'Rhetoric is the counterpart of dialectic . . .'

8 Zeno of Citium (335–263 BC) 'founder of the Stoic school'; see Cicero *Orator* 32.113: 'Zeno . . . used to give an object lesson of the difference between the two arts; clenching his fist he said logic was like that; relaxing and extending his hand, he said eloquence was like the open palm. Still earlier Aristotle in the opening chapter of his *Art of Rhetoric* [1.1] said that rhetoric is the counterpart of logic, the difference obviously being that rhetoric was broader and logic narrower.' See also Quintilian 2.20.7.

9 'Paralogisms,' defined by the OED 2 457: 'A piece of false or erroneous reasoning; an illogical argument; a faulty syllogism; a fallacy, *esp.* (as distinct from *sophism*) one of which the reasoner himself is unconscious.' (Translator's note) See LSJ 1317 παραλογισμός.

day by day, grow old there as if at the Sirens' rocks.[10] These studies suit early youth, though at the same time it is of great importance how soberly they are imparted, and the nature of the training makes the greatest difference. Those who impart dialectic and the other philosophical subjects do no little harm to boys' talents, since they are less concerned with what is useful for their pupils than with displaying their own learning, and they train them more for the wrestling ring[11] than for war; and so, by tormenting them with their useless complications and riddles, they inflict a threefold damage upon tender minds. First, they often deter nobler talents from these disciplines; next, they waste time (as precious as it is fleeting),[12] since it would have been possible meantime to learn some other things useful to know; finally, they cause them to appear more truly inept than trained when they come to serious business, just as few are more unprepared for a real battle than those who have learned and taught all their life the art of fighting with swords.[13] In the school they have learned how to cut an arrow with a sword before it reaches its target; but in war someone who is preparing to shoot does not forewarn the person he is going to attack, and the rules of the swordsman's school are not observed there. Yet it would be profitable to have learned these disciplines soundly right from the earliest years and to have applied the training to the function for which the youth has been intended. And someone intended for pleading court cases or for undertaking princes' embassies and someone being prepared for sacred oratory should not be trained in the same manner although in the same discipline, just as someone being trained for the school must be exercised differently in dialectic from someone being trained for theology.[14] By imparting

* * * * *

10 'Sirens' rocks' refers to Homer's *Odyssey* 12.153–92, where the Sirens' songs captivated mariners, causing their ships to crash upon the rocks. Erasmus speaks of the young destined for preaching who, after studying dialectic for a while, never advance but spend their entire lives in that discipline; see Ovid *Metamorphoses* 14.78, 82, 91; Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 16.8.17; also see *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 387; *De ratione studi* CWE 24 671; *Moria* CWE 27 92.

11 'Wrestling ring' (*ad palaestram*); cf *Adagia* V ii 10 *Res palaestrae et olei* 'A thing of oil and the wrestling-school'; Quintilian 10.1.79 *et palaestrae quam pugnae magis accommodatus*.

12 See *Moria* CWE 27 93.

13 Cf Quintilian 5.12.15–23, where he makes the same criticisms against those teaching declamation. Erasmus will repeat this example at book 2 69.

14 Fundamental in Erasmus is the distinction between the preacher, the true theologian who speaks before the congregation of the faithful, instructs hearers in 'that ineffable philosophy that the Son of God brought to earth from the bosom of his Father,' and the teacher of scholastic philosophy (dialectic).

these disciplines soundly and exercising them appropriately, one acquires a certain mental dexterity both for sound judgment and for ease in speaking; when this ability has been acquired by human industry, the richer grace of the Spirit comes over it and instead of depleting it completes it, instead of taking it away assists it.[15] Just as it displays its energy more splendidly through an exceptional natural endowment when it finds one, in precisely the way that an outstanding artist shows his artistry more precisely and to happier effect in impressive and tractable material, so that heavenly Spirit is so far from scorning our industry that it even demands it, and it does not disdain to have its gifts assisted in turn by our application,[16] so long as there is no sanctimonious smugness. Now, though we grant that some have been born with so happy a talent that they have both judged wisely and reasoned perceptively without knowledge of dialectic and have spoken eloquently without rhetorical instruction, nevertheless, given the extreme rarity of such felicity among the human race, nature's weakness receives no little assistance from instruction and exercise, instruction for forming judgment and exercise for persuasion. Likewise, since only some – perhaps even none – receive that richness of gifts from the Spirit that the apostles did,[17] it would be no impiety to supply with the aid of the disciplines what is lacking in the Spirit's gifts. Again, though we grant that some have managed by long practice to supply from experience what art teaches, yet the addition of instruction causes that ability to come more surely and more speedily, for as the wise man says, experience is a slower teacher of the stupid;[18] and just as a physician who has learned to heal by killing is to be avoided, so we should not wish for a knowledge that has been learned to help by causing injury.[19]

* * * * *

Erasmus repeats this often. See also *Paraclesis* in Olin 145. The difference necessitates a different type of education for the preacher, which Erasmus sets forth in book 3.

15 See book 1 CWE 67 325 n562.

16 The idea of the grace of the Holy Spirit assisting the industry of the preacher recalls St Thomas' response to (Peter Abelard's) Objection 2, the statement whether man can prepare himself for grace: 'If man does what is in him to do, God will not deny him grace' *Facienti quod in se est Deus non denegat gratiam*. Thomas explains that 'when a man is said to do what is in him to do, this is said to be in his power according as he is moved by God' (*Ad secundum*); see *Summa theologiae* I IIae q 109 a 6; see also q 112 a 3; cf Rom 5:1–5.

17 See Acts 2:1–4.

18 For variations on the adage 'Experience is a slower teacher of the stupid,' see *Adagia* I i 30–1.

19 Erasmus' comparison is one of a multitude in the *Ecclesiastes* that recall the comparisons (*parabolae* or *similia*) of his *Parabolae* CWE 23 123–277.

Realizing this, King Philip of Macedon entrusted his son Alexander to Aristotle[20] right from early boyhood to be imbued with philosophy's doctrines, because he understood, of course, that more is learned in a single day from instruction than from many years' experience, especially when the instruction itself embodies experience, having been handed down by people who, in addition to their exceptional natural endowment, have acquired this wisdom as well by daily practical experience. Now, if someone should think that one ought to grant considerable importance to experience in private affairs, I will not dispute with him in any way, but in public functions, where a trivial slip brings no trivial danger to the people, one should not hear too often the words 'I hadn't thought.'[21] Moreover, among those from whom either the greatest benefit or the greatest harm comes to the state, the most outstanding are the prince and the preacher,[22] and of these two the preacher is the more important, inasmuch as even the instruction of princes depends upon him. But, just as instructions bring more profit if applied to a mind already fertile of itself, so the Holy Spirit works more fully if it finds a heart readied by the liberal disciplines.[23] Again, the lessons of art do not help so much if they have not passed through regular custom into habit as if into one's nature, so that, just as a skilful musician is always able to play correctly even if he is not thinking about modes and harmonies, likewise whatever the theme at hand requires will occur effortlessly to the preacher when he goes to speak, even if he is not even thinking about rhetorical precepts. To speak well, it helps to scorn artifice – but after the ability to speak has been acquired by its practice; thus those who are being trained for the art of painting explore the συμμετρίαι [due proportions] of the limbs with a compass, but once they have acquired the habit by instructions and custom,

* * * * *

20 See Plutarch *Alexander* 7–8.

21 'I hadn't thought' (*non putaram*); See Cicero *De officiis* 1.23.81: 'Now all this requires great personal courage; but it calls also for great intellectual ability by reflection to anticipate the future, to discover some time in advance what may happen whether for good or for ill, and what must be done in any possible event, and never to be reduced to having to say "I had not thought of that" [*non putaram*].'

22 Erasmus states this at the outset of book 1 and repeats it often. In comparison, the work of the preacher is infinitely greater, but the work of the prince is necessary to create a stable society for the preacher's activity. See book 1 CWE 67 251.

23 Another fundamental principle of Erasmus is that the liberal arts open the mind to receive divine instruction; they are the best preparation not just for the preacher but for the hearers of the word. The idea, too, is that grace perfects nature; it does not destroy it. See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 1 a 8: *cum enim gratia non tollat naturam, sed perficiat* . . .

they paint better without the compass, since it requires greater artistry to make some limbs appear smaller than they really are and to make things appear to recede or to stand out, which are neither receding nor standing out. For it is part of the artist's skill to represent things not as they are, but as they appear to viewers;[24] moreover, the same things appear differently according to whether one looks from near or from far, from high up or from below, from the side or back or from the front. Moreover, just as it is appropriate during an exploration of syllogisms or enthymemes[25] in the schools to mention the figures that Aristotle imparted in the *Prior Analytics* and the ways of reasoning soundly in the *Posterior Analytics* or the collections of *Topics*, and it is not an inappropriate time to introduce the sophisms of refutations[26] and to examine the difficulty of modal and mixed propositions,[27]

* * * * *

24 Chomarat suggests that Erasmus' reflections on painting derive from conversations he had with Albrecht Dürer, Quinten Metsys, and Hans Holbein ASD V-1 251 113–14n.

25 For enthymemes, see Quintilian 5.10.1; and Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1.2.8 (1356b): 'Accordingly I call an enthymeme a rhetorical syllogism and an example rhetorical induction. Now all orators produce belief by employing as proofs either examples or enthymemes and nothing else . . .' See also Quintilian 1.10.37–8. Erasmus takes up the enthymeme below at 716.

26 'Sophisms of refutations' alludes to Aristotle's work on logic, *De sophisticis elenchis*. The *Categories*, *On Interpretation*, *Prior Analytics*, *Posterior Analytics*, *Topics*, and *Sophistical Refutations* comprised the *Organon*, the corpus of the philosopher's writings on logic that served as the foundation for the study of dialectic in the Middle Ages. Here Erasmus means something like 'sophisitical refutations' or 'deceptive refutations' or 'detecting bogus refutations.' The point is that it is important for the preacher to appropriate these devices of formal logic to expound Scripture clearly and correctly but not parade them before a congregation. In 1531, Erasmus' sometimes difficult friend Simon Grynaeus (c 1494–1541) lectured on the *Organon* at the University of Basel and with Johann Bebel, Erasmus' acquaintance and a publisher at Basel, issued a Greek edition of Aristotle's *Organon*, for which Erasmus wrote a commendatory preface. See Allen Ep 2432 to John More (27 February 1531). For Simon Grynaeus, see CEBR II 142–6; for John Bebel, see CEBR I 112–13.

27 Modal propositions are those that deal with logical judgments of what is to be asserted as true or false or possible. See Aristotle *De interpretatione* 21a34–23a37. See Mack *Renaissance Argument* 80 and 90 n11: 'Modal propositions are propositions which are modified by a clause which introduces them, eg "It is possible that . . ." Aristotle identified four types, but the tradition increased them to six (possible, impossible, necessary, contingent, true, false)'; Richard Patterson *Aristotle's Modal Logic: Essence and Entailment in the Organon* (Cambridge 1995); E. Jennifer Ashworth 'Developments in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries' in Gabbay *Handbook* 609–43. Mixed propositions involve

so it would be ineffective to introduce the same concepts before a judge or before a congregation, though at the same time the preacher is employing all of them while concealing his art and clarifying the complexity of his thoughts in such a way that the congregation feels that his words are spoken truly rather than cleverly and the obscure becomes clear, the complex simple, the difficult easy. The methods of accomplishing this will be discussed in their place. Yet it is useful for him to be trained in them throughout his youth, but with discretion, that is, so that his judgment may become more sure and prompt, for there must be judgment before there is expression, knowledge before speech, just as in nature a spring comes before a river, and in the arts sketching comes before painting. But since, as we have said, the preacher must be endowed with a variety of gifts in accordance with the dignity of his office, it is neither within my power nor proper to this purpose to indicate here what he ought to have learned, but we shall give advice in passing on certain particular points that are more useful for this theme.

First, it is clear that grammar is the basis of all the disciplines; the great extinction or corruption of good authors and disciplines that has proceeded from its neglect is too familiar to require demonstration here.[28] When I say grammar, I do not mean the inflection of nouns and verbs and agreement of subject with predicate, but the ways of speaking correctly and properly, something that occurs only from extensive reading of the ancients[29] who excelled in the elegance of their language. And yet in our own age we are right to be glad that the literary schools have almost been freed of the sort of scholar who drilled his boys in manners of signifying and other fabricated difficulties with inelegant and sophistic words while only teaching

* * * * *

statements that contain more than one type of proposition; see Aristotle *De interpretatione* 20b1–21a1 and *Prior Analytics*.

28 As Erasmus makes clear here and below, grammar comprises a vast field that also included a thorough knowledge of the ancient prose writers and poets, history, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. See also *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 371 and Chomarat *Grammaire* I 183 n1. See also Quintilian 1.4.5: 'Unless it [grammar] has faithfully laid the future orator's foundations, whatever you build on them will collapse'; see also 1.4–9 for his extended discussion of grammar.

29 See *De ratione studii* CWE 24 672–91, *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 371: '... to be able to speak with fluency, correctness, and style. Over and above all this, his language must not merely be grammatical: it must also be Latin [*nisi et Latine dicat*].' See Quintilian 1.6.27 n24: 'It is one thing to speak as grammarians prescribe, but quite another to speak Latin [*Latine*].' See also Quintilian 586 n23.

them to speak barbarously,[30] whereas grammar is the art of speaking correctly. This seemed to be a royal road, when in fact it was a primrose path. They used to rush the boys prematurely to dialectic and so to sophistic study: but dialectic is blind without grammar, for whatever dialectic does, it does through language – through this it enunciates, defines, divides, and connects.[31]

For this, one requires knowledge of the words by which particular things are expressed,[32] as well as their composition,[33] both of which depend not upon the judgment of the disputants but upon the practice of the ancients who spoke correctly.[34] Both involve no small difficulty, since in certain regions many things either do not exist at all or have a different appearance; hence the great variety in words for fish, birds, quadrupeds, trees, grasses, shrubs, and gems.[35] We do not know what sort of fish a *spinus* is, or an *urtica*, or a *mytilus*, but the Venetians do not know what we call an *asella* or *sturio* and others think is a *silurus*.[36] The same error induces our painters to

* * * * *

30 Erasmus refers here to the medieval grammarians known often as *modistae*; see *Antibarbari* CWE 23 34 n2.

31 'Enunciates, defines, divides, and connects' represent technical terms used in scholastic philosophy; see eg Aristotle *Posterior Analytics*; and Thomas Aquinas *In Aristotelis Libros Peri Hermeneias et Posteriorum Analyticorum Expositio. Cum textu ex recensione Leonina* ed P. Fr. Raymund M. Spiazzi, O.P. (Rome 1955) 35: 'Et dividitur pars haec in duas: in prima, determinat de enunciatione absolute; in secunda, de diversitate enunciationum, quae provenit secundum ea quae simplici enunciationi adduntur; et hoc in secundo libro; ibi: quoniam autem est de aliquo affirmatio etc. Prima autem pars dividitur in partes tres. In prima, definit enunciationem; in secunda, dividit eam; ibi: est autem una prima oratio etc, in tertia, agit de oppositione partium eius ad invicem; ibi: quoniam autem est enunciare etc.' Cf Quintilian 7.10.5, 9.1.41; and Cicero *Orator* 32.115–33.117, *De partitione oratoria* 8.29

32 For Erasmus' understanding of how the meanings of words change over time, see *De copia* CWE 24, especially 319: 'Vocabulary: Chronological considerations.' See also *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 171–243.

33 On the composition of words, see Quintilian 1.6.65–72.

34 Erasmus' position is that the ancients spoke Latin correctly. Chomarat notes that Erasmus follows Lorenzo Valla in the position that one must 'speak Latin correctly, not grammatically' (ASD V-4 253 155n). In other words, speaking follows usage, not logical rules; grammar therefore is not rigidly subordinate to logic. For Valla's importance and impact on Erasmus, see Chomarat *Grammaire* I 259–65, II 734–5.

35 See *Colloquia* (*Amicitia*) CWE 40 1033–55. See also Chomarat *Grammaire* I 42–50.

36 For *spinus* the OLD gives 'a thorn bush'; for *urtica* 'a stinging nettle' and 'a sea creature with stinging organs, a jelly fish or sea anemone'; no entry for *mytilus*; for *asella* 'a she ass'; no entry for *sturio*; for *silurus* 'a name covering a variety

paint a box tree instead of a palm and to produce Paul the Hermit[37] dressed in a robe woven from branches of the box tree, though nothing can be woven out of box wood, but baskets can be woven out of the pointed branches of the palm: his body was covered, but it was pricked. In fact, on the final Sunday of Lent,[38] which is called Palm Sunday, fronds of the box tree are consecrated in place of palms, though there is a greater difference between the palm and the box tree than between a nettle and a beet. Not to mention the fact that even among the ancients the words for things do not always agree; this is clear from Pliny,[39] Dioscorides,[40] and Ermolao Barbaro,[41] who

* * * * *

of fishes, especially the European catfish or sheatfish, also an unidentified Nile fish, and others.'

37 St Jerome's colourful *Vita S. Pauli* (*The Life of Paul the First Hermit*) (12) is the single source of our information on this saint who is said to have practiced the hermitic life before St Antony. Erasmus' comments on the artistic representation of Paul the Hermit could refer to the works of many artists who depicted this popular subject. Chomarat notes that Matthias Grünewald's Isenheim Altarpiece in the Unterlinden Musée at Colmar, France has a depiction of Paul the Hermit clothed in woven palm leaves (asd v-4 253 161–2n), which is what Jerome says he wore: 'The blessed Paul ... had so long worn a garment of palm-leaves stitched together ...' Grünewald also depicts Paul beneath a palm tree.

38 Lent is the period of six weeks (forty days) in the liturgical calendar that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. On Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter, palm branches and fronds are blessed and distributed in the churches in commemoration of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem accompanied by the Hebrew children singing, 'Hosanna' (Matt 21:9–10; Mark 11:8–10; Luke 19:36–40; John 12:12–14).

39 Pliny the Elder (AD 23 or 24–79), author of *Naturalis historia* (37 books). See OCD 845–6.

40 Pedanius Dioscorides (AD c 40–90) of Anazarbus in Cilicia, physician in Claudius' and Nero's army and author of *De materia medica*, the first systematic exposition of medicines, giving 'remedies from the vegetable, animal, and mineral kingdoms,' which became the standard text on the subject. See OCD 353–4.

41 Ermolao Barbaro (1453/4–93), born in Venice, educated at Padua, and later professor there, was made patriarch of Aquilea. He translated Themistius and published in 1492 his emendation of Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis historia* as *Castigationes Pliniae*; CEBR I 91–2. Chomarat notes that Erasmus places him in the top rank of humanists along with Pico della Mirandola and Angelo Poliziano (ASD v-4 255 168n). See Erasmus' letter to William Blount, Lord Montjoy (Paris, June 1500), Ep 126:149–68, where Barbaro is noted for his 'devoted and painstaking work' (*absoluta diligentia*); see also Ep 1544:36–41. Barbaro is mentioned by Erasmus and praised in *Adagia* I iv 39 (Erasmus gives Barbaro's epitaph for Rodolphus Agricola) and in *Adagia* IV vi 18 and 2n. Beatus Rhenanus refers

along with others have worked hard on this subject. But there is greater ambiguity in regard to objects that are continually being changed through the inventiveness of the workers, as in clothing, weapons, houses, ships, musical instruments, carriages, coins, weights, and measures. Moreover, it sometimes happens that, if we do not retain the ancient form of these things, it is impossible to explain comfortably a passage of Scripture, which is full of words of this sort, not to mention words that among the same nationality mean different things in the same language.[42]

There is a like difficulty in the words for cities, mountains, rivers, springs, and lakes, which human practice or time or custom has changed more than once. There is the further difficulty that the same river or the same sea acquires different names in different places, also that in different areas one sometimes finds several cities and rivers of the same name. Beyond this is the fact that time's power is so great that it alters the appearance not only in things that take shape as a result of decisions made by artists but also in those that are solid in themselves, as though nature's envy has taken care that there should be no sure knowledge of things that can be transmitted in writing to posterity with undoubtable fidelity but require a particular experience of each of them.[43] Not only are there now plains where there once was a mountain, a lake where there once was a city, a paved road where there once was a swamp, but the ancients' description does not correspond in the trees and grasses themselves. And so if someone should inspect pictures and statues – not ancient ones, but those made ninety years ago – he would notice that not only in fashion but in their very faces the appearance of mankind differed from that of our times.[44] Finally, whether by some occult power of the stars or by the mixing of species, nature herself every

* * * * *

to him as 'the immortal glory of Venice'; see Rhenanus 46. An edition of Barbaro's *Castigationes Pliniae* was published in 1534 at Basel by Johann Walder (Johannes Valderus); the editio princeps appeared in 1493 at Rome published by Eucharius Argenteus. For Barbaro's work, see Brian W. Ogilvie *The Science of Describing: Natural History in Renaissance Europe* (Chicago 2010) 122–33; and V. Branca 'Ermolao Barbaro and Late Quattrocento Venetian Humanism' in *Renaissance Venice* ed J.R. Hale (London 1973) 218–43. For Pliny, see 'Pliny the Elder' in *Classical Tradition* 744–5.

42 Erasmus articulates here the crucial point for exegetes to recover the meaning of words and ideas in their historical context. See *De ratione studii* CWE 24 673–4.

43 It is precisely this problem of historical change that requires such scrupulous industry in the study of Scripture and in fidelity to the teachings of Christ.

44 See also *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 454–5.

day gives birth to new forms of things, the way the proverb boasts, without falsehood, of Africa.[45] Human cleverness increases this variety by multiplying or mixing the prepared seeds of trees or grasses. But if someone scorns this part of grammar, let him scorn on the same account all those distinguished volumes that Aristotle, Macer,[46] Dioscorides,[47] Theophrastus,[48] Nicander,[49] and Oppian[50] have written about the forms and properties of living creatures, trees, grasses, and gems.

But when the preacher has to treat a comparison or allegory,[51] it will not seem enough to know that some word is the name of a tree or fish or gem or river, for the treatment of such figures of speech is not taken from the simple name but from the form, nature, power, and effect of the thing from which the comparison is drawn. For example, palms are frequently mentioned in writing, as in the forty-two stations of the Hebrews[52] or in the

* * * * *

45 See *Adagia* III vii 10 *Semper Africa novi aliquid apportat* 'Africa always produces something novel.' The quotation is from Pliny *Historia naturalis* 8.16.42.

46 Aemilius Macer of Verona, Augustan poet, who left a few fragments of didactic poetry. He is mentioned by Ovid *Tristia* 4.10.43 and Quintilian (10.1.56 and 87; 12.11.27). Cf OCD 634.

47 See n40 above.

48 Theophrastus (c 370–288/5 BC) of Eresos in Lesbos was a pupil and assistant of Aristotle, who went with him to Macedonia and from there to Athens, and succeeded him as scholarch of the Lyceum at Athens. According to Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* (Theophrastus), Theophrastus wrote and lectured on botany and political science, and named among his students Demetrios of Phaeleron and Menander. Erasmus seems to refer here to his influential botanical works. Cf OCD 1058–9. See also Quintilian 10.1.83.

49 Nicander of Colophon (fl 197–30 BC), author of two complete extant poems: *Theriaca*, on snakes, poisonous creatures, and antidotes for their bites, and *Alexipharmaca*, on natural and animal poisons. He also authored other works on farming, bee-keeping, medical topics, etc, little of which still exists. See OCD 732.

50 Oppian of Apamea (c late second century AD), born near Pella, Macedonia, and Oppian of Corycus (fl 180–160 BC) in Cilicia; the former wrote the *Cynegetica*, a hunting poem in hexameter, which he dedicated to the emperor Caracalla (AD 211–17); the latter wrote a poem on fishing (*Halieulica*), dedicated to Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. Though some confusion exists about their identity, scholars now believe they were two different poets.

51 See book 3.

52 Num 33:1–49. The stations or 'mansions' or 'halting places' were the stops the Israelites made between their departure from Egypt and their crossing the Jordan; the stations are symbolic of the Christian's pilgrimage in this world. See Jerome *Epistola 78: Ad Fabiolam de mansionibus filiorum Israhel per Heremum* CSEL 55 49–87; and Ambrose *De XLII mansionibus filiorum Israel tractatus* PL 17 9–40:

mystic Song, 'I shall ascend into the palm, and I shall pluck its fruits.'[53] What is the man going to say who simply does not know what sort of tree this is, or who thinks that a box tree is a palm, since the nature of a box tree is completely different from a palm except that each stays constantly green? But the man who has learned that the most praised of this name grow in Judaea, whence the name of the region too is Phoenice,[54] with a tall trunk, branches that stretch on high, of such natural strength that they are said to grow vertically against a weight put upon them; that the fruits, far and away the sweetest thing of all, are not hidden among the leaves but cling in bunches at the very top like grapes, while its root loves sandy and salty ground, its leaves prick with spines, but are of a sort that are always green and never fall off and for that reason are assigned to triumphs; that the tree moreover is never fertile except in hot regions, so much so that even Italy does not bear palms;[55] that the trunk, because of its ringed bark, provides a sort of stair for those wishing to climb; that the fruit itself is suitable both for eating and for making bread and for making wines – the man, I say, who knows these and other things will handle the comparison more comfortably, and the congregation will listen more willingly. For even to learn the shape and characteristics of unusual things is in itself a great pleasure. Otherwise comparisons and allegories are dull if the characteristics of the things from which the likeness is drawn are simply not known. For this purpose knowledge of different languages is helpful, a matter in which of course Dioscorides took pains. For here again there arises another difficulty, whether a tree that the Hebrews, Greeks, Romans, and common people call by different names is the same. Meanwhile, someone might ask me, 'What then? Are you proposing that a youth intended for theology should be tormented by these inexplicable difficulties?' Not at all – rather I want a grammarian employed who has a precise understanding of these things and teaches them appropriately; the

* * * * *

'In eodem deinde libro filiorum Israel itinera, profectiones, mansionesque a finibus Aegypti usque ad tempus et locum, quo Moses defunctus est, mandato Dei recensentur' (10).

53 Song of Sol 7:8. Cf Ambrose *Exameron* (*Six Days of Creation*) 3.13.53 [54] CSEL 32.1 96; FOC 42 121, and *De Isaac vel anima* 1.8.67 CSEL 32.1 641–700.

54 Erasmus is incorrect in stating that Judaea also has the name Phoenicia; but the word φοῖνιξ 'a Phoenician' also means date-palm.

55 For 'even Italy does not bear palms,' see Pliny *Naturalis historia* 13.6.27. Erasmus' discussion of palm trees is taken from Pliny. Pliny states that 'Judaea is even more famous for its palm trees . . .'; 'there are none in Italy not grown under cultivation . . . while only in really hot countries does the palm bear fruit.'

work of one will reduce the work of many. Enough about the bare, proper words for things to which metaphorical expressions are added.

But what charm will language have in calling a greedy man a 'gull' if I do not know the nature of a gull?[56] Or calling 'white'[57] what is prosperous and joyous if I do not know the reason for the metaphor, since the Greeks, with a slightly different metaphorical use of the word, call a clear and intelligible speech a λόγος λευκός [white speech]? Thus we also call intricate circumlocutions and convoluted reasonings 'Maeanders,'[58] a fickle man we call a 'Euripus';[59] the metaphor loses its appeal if I do not know the nature of the river and of the waters.

That leaves composition. What good will grammatical instruction about agreement of subject and predicate do me if I believe that one says, 'I give you a promise'[60] the same way one says, 'I give you money'? Who thinks that one says in a similar manner, 'I will make you a box' and 'I will make you a promise'? Let this sentence stand as an example, since the subject is otherwise endless. Or what good will come from the grammatical rule that teaches that a double negation is regarded as an affirmation,[61] when the practice of the Greek and Latin language often proves otherwise? In Matthew 26, when the Lord says, 'I shall not drink from now on of this fruit of the vine,'[62] etc, since the Greek is οὐ μὴ πίω [I *shall* not drink],[63] surely the dialectician will not say that this is an affirmative statement. And when a Roman says, 'I shall not give, not even a penny,' will he say that the penny has been promised or denied? Again, when a Roman says, 'Someone who has lived devoutly cannot not die well,' will he call this the assertion of someone who

* * * * *

56 Erasmus refers to book 1 CWE 67 432: 'seagull' (*larus*): see *Adagia* II ii 33.

57 See *Adagia* I v 54 *Creta notare, carbone notare* 'To mark with chalk, with coal,' where Erasmus notes, 'This is because of what Pythagoras says, that white belongs to the nature of good, and what is black to that of evil . . .'

58 See *Adagia* IV x 58.

59 See *Adagia* I ix 62 *Euripus homo* 'Man's a Euripus.'

60 For 'I give you a promise,' see *Paraphrasis in Elegantias Vallae* ASD I-4 256:336, 339; cf Lorenzo Valla *De elegantiis linguae latinae* 5.16.

61 Erasmus *Paraphrasis in Elegantias Vallae* ASD I-4 280:40–281:50; Valla *De elegantiis linguae latinae* 2.18, 3.27.

62 Matt 26:29 (Vulg 'dico autem vobis non bibam amodo de hoc genimine vitis usque in diem illum cum illud bibam vobiscum novum in regno patris mei')

63 Both οὐ (*ou*) and μή (*mê*) are negatives usually employed independently, the former (in general) to negate factual statements, the latter principally in subordinate clauses, but with an aorist subjunctive form of a verb (here πίω) the two may be used together to create the equivalent of an emphatic future with οὐ alone. (Translator's note)

is affirming or of someone who is denying? It is so far from denial that it asserts something as though it were necessary; but – to avoid embarking upon this rather deep sea – it is, as I began to say, a weak structure that is built by the man who leaps ahead to dialectic without first solidly laying the foundations of grammar. Moreover, this part of grammar is to be based upon every kind of author, but especially upon those who have excelled in the elegance of their language and are neither obsolete with age nor uncouth because of their novelty but midway between the two. And here again I would not burden youth with a curriculum comprising all the books of all writers; let them sample the best – let the instructor supply the rest.[64]

We have not yet left grammar, which embraces both history and poetry and knowledge of antiquity, as well as knowledge of the three languages.[65] History is simply blind without cosmography and arithmetic.[66] I am not using the term 'poetry' now for verse that limps along somehow or other on its feet, but for the technique that imparts to language dignity, gravity, pleasantness, the allure of a painting,[67] and a kind of divine inspiration[68] and a certain ἐνθυσιασμός [enthusiasm].[69] But this ability belongs only to the man who has stored in his mind every kind of learning, if true poetry is indeed only a cake made from the dainties and delights of all the disciplines or, to put it better, a honeycomb made from all the choicest blossoms. These were once

* * * * *

64 For a more explicit statement of the best authors, see *De ratione studii* CWE 24 669–70.

65 Ie Latin, Greek, Hebrew. Erasmus prescribes the learning of Hebrew for all future preachers; see below 485–6, where he suggests that preachers also learn other languages related to these, such as Aramaic and Syriac.

66 See *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 387, where Lion recommends that geography be studied before the study of rhetoric 'and be thoroughly mastered. Arithmetic, music, and astronomy need only be sampled.' See also *De ratione studii* CWE 24 672–5; and Quintilian 1.10.46–9. Erasmus' fellow humanist Willibald Pirckheimer (1470–1530) translated Ptolemy's *Geographia* from Greek into Latin; it was published at Strasbourg by Johannes Grieningerus. For Pirckheimer, see CEBR I 90–4; and see 'Ptolemy' in *Classical Tradition* 789–92.

67 On 'the allure of a painting,' see the comments of the character Bear in the dialogue *De recta pronuntiatione*, who speaks of Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) as greater than Apelles (CWE 26 398–9).

68 *divinitas* 'divinity'; LS 602 'divinitas' II B: 'divine quality, divine nature, excellence.' Cicero uses this of the orator; see *De oratore* 2.20.86: 'To my mind the state of the former [ie 'a man of the highest capacity'] partakes in a sense of the godlike'; *Orator* 19.62 (on Theophrastus' 'divinely beautiful language'); and Quintilian 11.2.7 (referring to memory: *quanta divinitas illa*).

69 'Enthusiasm' in its root sense of 'divine possession.' (Translator's note)

the rudiments provided by teachers; it is not worthwhile to repeat here how they can be imparted briefly, since we have often discoursed upon this elsewhere.[70] Learning these things in one's youth is really more play than work.

But, in order to accommodate the slowness of some persons, it will save a good deal of time if one imparts the most outstanding out of what is best, and as comfortably as possible, if one cuts away what tends towards ostentation or superstition, if one studies particular disciplines for competence rather than for curiosity; for competence has an end, curiosity never ends. For example, the science of the stars is easily learned and brings much utility so long as it teaches the locations and movements of the heavenly bodies;[71] but not even a man's whole life would be enough for curiosity about predictions and birthdays.[72] Likewise, it would help the future preacher to have a taste of geometry and perspective,[73] but these disciplines become so attractive for some that they think of nothing else their whole life, as the study becomes ever more and more appealing. But though we allow others to sit in these lecture halls, we must not allow it to the man who is hastening to the outstanding office with which we are now dealing. Those who undertake an embassy on important matters learn a good deal on the journey and receive a varied pleasure, but in passing, since they never tarry except when something turns up that proves particularly useful for the completion of their undertaking. A knowledge of nature brings the greatest profit and delight to every part of life, but those who παραφέρονται [are led astray]

* * * * *

70 See *De ratione studii* CWE 24 661–91; *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 367–475.

71 Chomarat notes that the term 'astrology' is used here in the primary sense of 'astronomy.' As such it is one of the four subjects of the quadrivium along with mathematics, geometry, and music. See Eugenio Garin *Astrology in the Renaissance: The Zodiac of Life* trans Carolyn Jackson and June Allen, trans rev Clare Robertson (London 1983) especially vi–xiv and 1–28; Grendler (2) 408–29; Brian P. Copenhaver 'Astrology and Magic' in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy* Charles B. Schmitt, Quentin Skinner, Eckhard Kessler, and Jill Kraye (Cambridge 1988) 264–300; and 'Astrology' and 'Astronomy' in *Classical Tradition* 84–9, 89–96.

72 Cf Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 2.22.32–2.23.36.

73 For the perspective in the Renaissance, see the many essays on this topic in *Renaissance Theories of Vision* ed John Shannon Hendrix and Charles H. Carman (Surrey, UK; Burlington, Vt 2010); Samuel Y. Edgerton *The Mirror, the Window, and the Telescope: How Renaissance Linear Perspective Changed Our Vision of the Universe* (Ithaca 2009); James Elkin 'Piero della Francesca and the Renaissance Proof of Linear Perspective' *Art Bulletin* 69/2 (1987) 220–30. Judith Veronica Field *The Invention of Infinity: Mathematics and Art in the Renaissance* (Oxford and New York 1997).

into magic and alchemy are misguided; and no less misguided are those who spend their entire lives in arguing about prime matter, about first principles, about the infinite,[74] about the origin of the world, never knowing the while what sort of animal a cicada is or what sort of tree a sorb is. In everything, moreover, the instructor's skill will do the most to lighten the burden. No one teaches more succinctly or more clearly than the man who knows his subject most precisely; the man who is learning while he is teaching is a poor teacher.[75] However ingenious Duns Scotus' teachings about metaphysics,[76] what do they have to do with the preacher? Knowledge of the law, especially sacred law,[77] which they call pontifical, is hardly to be

* * * * *

74 Erasmus refers here to scholastic philosophers (metaphysicians) and their abstract metaphysical principles (essence and existence, matter and form, substance and accident, act and potency, etc); he finds them lacking in concrete knowledge of the physical world. For medieval scholastic philosophy, see *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Philosophy* ed John Marenbon (New York 2012); *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy* (Dordrecht and London 2010); *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy* ed Robert Pasnau, associate ed Christina Van Dyke (Cambridge and New York 2010); and Étienne Gilson *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York 1955).

75 See *Adagia* v i 84 *Doceat qui didicit* 'Let one who has learned teach others.'

76 Johannes Duns Scotus (1266–1308), Franciscan scholastic theologian, taught at Oxford, Paris, and Cologne; see 'Duns Scotus, Bl Johannes' in ODCC 513–14; 'John Duns Scotus' in *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy: Philosophy Between 500 and 1500* ed Henrik Lagerlund 2 vols (Dordrecht 2011) I 611–19; Richard Cross *Duns Scotus* (New York 1999); Antonie Vos *The Philosophy of John Duns Scotus* (Edinburgh 2006); Étienne Gilson *A History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York c 1955) 454–71; idem *Jean Duns Scot* (Paris1952).

77 'Sacred law' or canon law consisted of the decretals, ie pontifical judgments, which over time became normative. Gratian's *Decretum* (c 1150) was the first compilation of papal decretals and became the basis of canon law, *Corpus iuris canonici*, which in turn invited numerous canon lawyers to comment on the issues they raised. See ODCC 277–8; 'Law, Roman' in *Classical Tradition* 512–19; James A. Brundage *Medieval Canon Law* (New York 1995). For an interesting look at Erasmus' regard (or rather disregard, contempt) of lawyers and canon lawyers like Gratian, see István Bejczy *Erasmus and the Middle Ages: The Historical Consciousness of a Christian Humanist* (Leiden and Boston 2001) 69–72. The author notes, however, that Erasmus did find the *Decretum* useful for 'the opinion quoted in the *Decretum* that the Latin text of the New Testament had to be checked against Greek manuscripts. Likewise he defended his philological approach to Scripture by pointing out that the *Decretales* condemned documents with obvious linguistic faults as spurious, while still another compilation of decrees, the *Clementinae*, would call for university instruction in the ancient languages' (71–2).

scorned, but many are deterred from it by the number of massive volumes, the carelessly digested heap of material, the wordiness of its interpreters, and the tangled mass of opinions. In the lessons of the rhetoricians too there are many things more suited to display than to use, and both among the Romans and among the Greeks there is no small throng of people who have written about the method of speaking; each has tried to add something of his own to the others' discoveries, and no small difficulty has been created by those who in imparting the precepts of the art create new words (which was a special concern of Quintilian)[78] and those who change the order so as not to seem to have nothing new to bring. And so the teacher will condense the multitude of instructions and will soon invite his pupil to use them, showing all the while what in the subject itself has been said in accordance with the art and what contrary to it.

There are, moreover, four outstanding things suited to acquiring the ability to speak: nature, art, imitation or example, and practice or exercise.[79] Nature's power is so great that everyone approves Horace's famous line, 'You will say or do nothing without Minerva's favour,'[80] but it is especially strong for poetry and rhetoric, and so the ancients considered poetry a matter not of art but of divine inspiration.[81] Of rhetoric it has been said that one learns it either quickly or never:[82] it is learned quickly by those that nature has fashioned in this way, never by those whose Minerva is averse, for whatever is akin is grasped immediately – so naphtha draws flame, a

* * * * *

78 See Lausberg §§547–51, 1058.2, 1068.

79 Erasmus follows Quintilian on these points, which Quintilian emphasizes in his preface to *Institutio oratoria*: 'Without natural gifts technical rules are useless . . .' (1.Pr.26–7.) See also *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 411–12, and *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 311: 'By nature I mean man's innate capacity and inclination for the good. By method I understand learning, which consists of advice and instruction. Finally, by practice I mean the exercise of a disposition which has been implanted by nature and moulded by method. Nature is realized only through method, and practice, unless it is guided by the principles of method, is open to numerous errors and pitfalls.' This statement is, of course, most appropriate to the training of future preachers. See also Plutarch *Moralia* 2A and Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 2.4.13.

80 Horace *Ars poetica* 385: *Tu nihil invita dices faciesve Minerva*); see *Adagia* I i 42 *Invita Minerva* 'Against Minerva's will.' See CWE 31 91, especially n42.

81 See especially Plato *Ion* 53A–D for Socrates' words on divine inspiration and possession in the poets.

82 Cicero *De oratore* 3.36.146: '"One thing in your discourse, particularly struck me," interposed Caesar, "your assertion that a person who does not succeed in learning a thing quickly will never be able to learn it thoroughly at all."'

magnet steel, amber chaff. Moreover, this talent betrays itself by tokens right in earliest youth, if anyone should happen to notice; for instance, Athanasius was shown by his childhood play to be born for holding the priesthood,[83] and Ovid, when assigned by his father's order to plead law cases, says wittily, 'Whatever I tried to say was poetry.'[84] Certainly the mind's capacity to learn can be detected already in infants from their facility in imitation, in somewhat older children by a quick and articulate use of the tongue and later by alertness of mind. For indomitable reserve or natural timidity makes many people useless for speaking, as has been reported of Isocrates in the literary tradition,[85] while at the same time the man's written texts are admired by learned critics. But nature's smaller impediments can be overcome by study and practice; some are so huge that fighting them is just like swimming against the stream.[86] Wise men have also noted and reported that boys who begin to speak later usually turn out to have a more powerful plectrum of the tongue.[87] Strong flanks and a powerful chest and vocal quality,

* * * * *

83 St Athanasius (c 296–373), bishop of Alexandria and champion of the anti-Arian party. See ODCC 119–20. The story of Athanasius as a boy playing the role of bishop is found in Rufinus' continuation of Eusebius' *Historia ecclesiastica*. The work with Rufinus' continuation (Books 10 and 11) appeared as *Ecclesiastica historia diui Eusebii. Et Ecclesiastica historia gentis Angloru[m] venerabilis Bede cum utraru[m]q[ue] historiaru[m] per singulos libros recollecta capitulorum annotatione* (Hagenau: Heinrich Gran, 7 December 1506). On Erasmus' search for Athanasius' writings, see his Ep 1790 to John Longland, Basel, 3 March 1527, and CWE 12 468 4n for information on Beatus Rhenanus' printed edition of the *Auctores historiae ecclesiasticae* (Basel: Froben 1523), 'a volume that also contained the earlier *Historia ecclesiatica* written by Eusebius and continued by Rufinus.' For Rufinus' continuation, see now *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia, Books 10 and 11* trans Philip R. Amidon (New York 1997); for the account of Athanansius as a boy, see 26–7.

84 Ovid *Tristia* 4.10.26 *sponte sua carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos, et quod temptabam scribere versus erat*. Erasmus might have been recalling these words from memory, as his quotation is not exact (ASD V-4 260:316 *Quicquid, inquit, tentabam dicere versus erat*).

85 Isocrates (436–338 BC), Athenian orator of great renown for his speeches, although he did not possess the physical endowments for speaking as required by Quintilian. See Pseudo-Plutarch *Moralia*, *Lives* (*Isocrates*): 'He had a weak voice and timid disposition' (837A) 4. Cicero has great praise for him; see *Orator* 12.39–40.

86 *Adagia* III ii 9 *Contra torrentem niti* 'To strive against the stream.'

87 A plectrum was a small instrument like a quill used for striking, for example, a lyre. See *Lingua* CWE 29 267; Cicero *De natura deorum* 2.59.149. See also letter to Justus Jonas (Antwerp, [c 20–6 May?] 1519), Ep 967A:62. Erasmus often uses the word as the equivalent of 'tongue.'

mental sharpness, and reliable memory appear in older children.[88] Finally, that special charm in speaking,[89] which nature gives to few, and which still does not have a name, is nonetheless perceived by observers, and not without admiration. It is quite often possible to see that all soon turn their eyes, ears, and mind to the speech of some persons, while scarcely anyone heeds the report of another who says much better things and in a better manner. Those who have a calmer mind are better suited for speaking than those whose mind is quick to anger; in Plato's opinion the latter are suited for learning disciplines thoroughly, the former for governing the state. Sometimes there also shine in the very young certain sparks of other virtues as well, such as modesty, sobriety, devotion, gentleness towards one's neighbour, zeal to benefit the state, just as the unbreakable force of Cato's mind and his hatred of tyranny flashed in him when he was still a boy.[90] If appropriate, careful, and correct instruction is added to these natural inclinations, there is great hope that, with the protection of the Holy Spirit, we shall have suitable heralds of God's word.

Moreover, it should be added to what we have said about knowledge of languages that it is not enough if someone intended for the office of preaching learns the three languages Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, which are valuable not for speaking to the congregation but for understanding the books of the ancients more correctly and for returning to the sources if we meet some ambiguity in the holy books. Indeed, the first sources of the Scriptures are Hebrew and its relatives Aramaic and Syriac; from this race the teaching of the true religion came first into the neighbouring regions Samaria and Arabia, then into Asia Minor and into Greece (the language of the New Testament),[91] hence into Italy, and from Italy into far distant nations. These three languages were once common; now the corruption caused by ordinary people, who always turn everything for the worse,[92] has advanced so far

* * * * *

88 See Quintilian 1.Pr.26–7.

89 *Venus illa in dicendo peculiaris*; cf Quintilian 10.1.79, who speaks of Isocrates: 'He elaborated all the graces of style . . .' 13–15 (*Isocrates . . . omnes dicendi veneres sectatus est*).

90 See Plutarch *Cato the Younger* 3.2.

91 Erasmus displays some carelessness with the Latin here; the translators choose to retain these and other such instances of his mistakes, except where the infelicities would cause confusion, or the results would sound worse in English than in Latin.

92 Erasmus sees these languages as having once existed in a pristine state, only to be corrupted by ignorance, multilingual interferences, and vulgar usage so that now the descendants of the Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins can no longer

that Hebrews do not understand the sacred books written in Hebrew unless they are taught, nor do Greeks when they are translated into or written in Greek, nor do Italians or Spaniards, Frenchmen or Africans when they are translated into Latin. Though Hebrew occupies the first rank of these three, its usefulness is circumscribed within the narrowest of limits; the use of the Greek language has spread furthest, not only because it was the first into which the Old Testament was translated[93] and because the New was written in it, but also because almost all the liberal disciplines and all philosophy has reached us through Greeks in the Greek language. Knowledge of these languages, therefore, is valuable for making a judgment.

But to ensure that the future preacher has a command of language when addressing the congregation, care must be taken that he be brought up among those who are fluent in the vulgar or vernacular tongue of the people.[94] This, according to some distinguished teachers of rhetoric, has greatly assisted certain men, famous for their eloquence, in learning to speak well, and this facility requires no effort to achieve. Whatever is instilled into the ears of children has a wonderful way of taking hold. Nor indeed is it enough, for example, for a preacher in France to know how to return a greeting in French or to manage a few words of conversation on common topics. The pulpit, where the greatest matters are discussed, requires a magnificent, appropriate, expressive, and ready supply of

* * * * *

even understand the language of their forefathers. Among humanists of the 1400s the debate on the languages (*questione della lingua*) queried whether Italian was a corruption of Latin or an independent language that was spoken by Roman society's elite. On this prominent theme of degeneration in Erasmus' writings, see Cecil Grayson *A Renaissance Controversy, Latin or Italian? An inaugural lecture, delivered before the University of Oxford on 6 November, 1959* (Oxford 1960); Peter Hainsworth et al *The Languages of Literature in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford and New York 1988); Chomarat *Grammaire* I 84, 103 and 'Latin Language' in *Classical Tradition* 509–12.

93 Ie the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament, carried out by a group of Hebrew scholars at Alexandria, Egypt, sometime in the third or second century BC. According to Hebrew tradition, Ptolemy Philadelphius (285–46 BC) enlisted seventy-two Hebrew scholars to translate the Hebrew Scriptures for the great library at Alexandria. See 'Septuagint' (LXX) in ODCC 1483–4.

94 Erasmus makes clear the singular importance of knowing well the vernacular for preaching. Though he does not elaborate this point, he understands that nearly all preaching is in the vernacular languages, and that a liberal arts education and skill (*peritia*) in 'the three languages' were crucial for preaching to congregations of all types.

words;[95] if this is not at hand and in readiness, so to speak, as a result of much practice, the preacher is often at a loss. Certain words are by their very nature modest, but popular custom, in its constant search for novelty, nevertheless turns them either into a joke or into an obscene meaning. It is useful for the preacher to know these, so that he can avoid them, of course, and he must find a way to explain what needs to be understood either through other more modest words or through paraphrase; for example, if you were to say 'love' in the vulgar tongue among our people, it sounds obscene, not by the nature of the word but by the stupid abuse of the common people. The same thing happens if you translate 'marriage' by the commonly accepted word.

And so it would be profitable if youths intended for preaching are taken often to the sermons of eloquent men and are gradually introduced to the habit of remembering and repeating what they have heard.[96] When they have made progress in this, then they must be advised whether anything worthy of note was said in that sermon, whether the exordium was chosen appropriately, whether there was an original and appropriate division, whether a difficulty was resolved cleverly, whether a passage of Scripture was explained correctly, whether some πάθος [passage of high emotion] was treated with proper gravity, whether there was some incisive and elegant idea in the address. Advised on these points, the boy will acquire the habit of noticing similar things on his own. On the other hand, if something happens that deserves reproach, as quite a few things often do, it will be profitable to point them out to the youth as well, but without effrontery lest the vice of criticism and contempt for the preacher seize this opportunity to enter; the preacher's mistakes are to be pointed out but minimized with a courteous explanation. Moreover, though those who speak best especially deserve to be heard, nevertheless it is sometimes useful to hear those who speak ignorantly as well, the more to show what is proper and what is not: it was apparently with this in mind that the Spartans used to display their Helots drunk at banquets and force them to wild singing and

* * * * *

95 'Supply of words' (*verborum copia*); see *De copia* CWE 24 279–659, especially 295–319.

96 Erasmus commends the Roman practice of fathers taking their sons to the forum to hear orations and thereby acquiring an education by listening and appreciating the best examples of speaking. See eg Tacitus *Dialogus de oratoribus* 34 and Cicero *Pro Caelio* 3.9–12, 30.72. See also Stanley F. Bonner *Education in Ancient Rome: From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1977), chapter VII, 'Cicero and the idea of oratorical education,' 76–89; and M.L. Clarke *Rhetoric at Rome: A Historical Survey* (New York 1953) 20–1.

ludicrous acrobatics so that their freeborn youths should see the disgrace and shun a servile character all the more.[97] And so the first thing will be to spend time among those who speak purely and elegantly, next to listen to preachers who are valued for the grace of their language, third to pore over the books of those who have been valued for their eloquence in the vulgar tongue, like Dante and Petrarch celebrated among the Italians. No language is so crude that it does not have a peculiar elegance and expressiveness of its own if it is cultivated. Those who are skilled in Italian, Spanish, or French firmly aver that these languages, however corrupted, contain a grace that Latin does not achieve. They say the same about English, though it has been assembled from many languages, and about German, and in individual languages there have been some whose published books have earned them uncommon praise for style. And so let the future preacher not hesitate to devote some portion of his time to volumes of this sort; though scholars find the reading of Latin or Greek authors more pleasant, yet Christian charity will not deem barbarous a language through which one's neighbour is drawn towards Christ. Only take care here to avoid the foolish affectation of those who abandon the words proper to their own language and add foreign ones stolen from French or from Latin, so that though they are speaking among Brabantians they are yet understood only by those who know Latin or French.[98] We should preserve everywhere the emperor Tiberius' rule, not to speak troublesomely.[99]

* * * * *

97 See Plutarch *Lycurgus* 28.5–6.

98 Erasmus' advice here follows Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.10.24–5.

99 'Tiberius' rule not to speak troublesomely' (*Ubique servandum est illud Tyberii Caesaris, ne moleste loquamur*); see Suetonius *Tiberius* 71, where Tiberius refuses to mix Latin with Greek words and where 'he begged pardon [of the senate] for the necessity of employing a foreign term [*monopolium*].' Chomarat states that there is no source for the 'rule of Tiberius, not to speak troublesomely (*ne moleste loquamur*),' but that it is a gloss by Erasmus; ASD V-4 265 408–9n. Chomarat misses Erasmus' point that the preacher adopt Tiberius' practice of avoiding 'the foolish affectation (*inepta affectatio*) of those who abandon the words proper to their own language and add foreign ones . . .' Suetonius' comment on Tiberius should be seen together with *Divus Augustus* 86, where Augustus' elegant style of speaking establishes a high standard of Latinity, so that he 'did not spare even Tiberius, who sometimes hunted up obsolete and pedantic expressions . . . And in a letter praising the talent of his granddaughter Agrippina he writes: "But you must take great care not to write and talk (*loquaris*) affectedly (*moleste*)."' This passage speaks of Erasmus' remarkable familiarity with Suetonius' diction, since the combination of *loqui* and *moleste* occurs only once here in Latin literature. In the context of Suetonius'

But if anyone is deterred from expertise in languages by their difficulty, let him consider that Mithridates, king of Pontus, learned twenty one languages so thoroughly that he pronounced legal judgments to each nation without an interpreter;[100] let him consider that Themistocles, the Athenian general, learned Persian so well in a single year that he was able to converse with the king without an interpreter.[101] You would hardly believe how many things the human mind would be capable of learning if we did not waste our early youth, which is far the best part, in idleness and trifles.

If someone were to ask me at this point which books among secular and ecclesiastical teachers merit special study by the future preacher,[102] there is no one to prefer, or scarcely even to compare, to Demosthenes and Cicero,[103] at least as far as pertains to the powers of language. Aristotle contributes a great deal to judgment and to knowledge, rather less to popular language;[104] Plato is far more suited to this, for he is free flowing and agreeable, and through his comparisons he lends one a sort of guiding hand towards knowledge of the truth.[105] There is considerable wisdom and eloquence in Livy's

* * * * *

two passages, Erasmus' inference is correct that Tiberius followed a rule that prohibited the use of Greek words in Latin, which would be to 'speak troublesomely' or 'affectedly' (*moleste loqui*).

100 See Quintilian 11.2.50 'twenty-two languages.' See Erasmus *Lingua* CWE 29 267 and n23 (482), which also attributes this information to Valerius Maximus 8.7.16, who says 'the languages of twenty-two nations'; and Pliny *Naturalis historia* 7.24.88 'king of twenty-two races gave judgments in as many languages.'

101 See Plutarch *Themistocles* 29.1–3: According to Plutarch, Themistocles wanted time to prepare his words; the Persian king granted him 'a year; in which time, having learnt the Persian language sufficiently, he spoke with the king by himself without the help of an interpreter' (29.3). Cf Valerius Maximus 8.7, ext 15, who says that Themistocles learned Persian before visiting the Persian king.

102 In the following paragraphs Erasmus follows the inspiration of Quintilian in enumerating the best authors to read, and in many instances confirms Quintilian's opinion of their merits; see Quintilian 10.1.37–131. Erasmus, of course, picks up where Quintilian left off, adding the names of later Roman authors such as Seneca and Tacitus, as well as the best Christian writers, beginning with Origen and Athanasius. Erasmus has a similar set of recommendations in *De ratione studii* CWE 24 672–91.

103 This is also emphatically Quintilian's judgment; see Quintilian 10.1.105–23.

104 Quintilian 10.1.83

105 Quintilian 10.1.81, 108. See Chomarat 'Erasme et Platon' *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé* (1987) 25–48.

speeches,[106] or if he is not reporting a speech, in his accounts of strategy.[107] He is also agreeable in the gentler emotions, which the Greeks call *ethos*,[108] as is Virgil as well.[109] The fiercer emotions are found in the tragedians, though the Romans, at any rate those that survive, are more forceful in this regard than the Greeks;[110] but there will be an opportunity to speak about these when we discuss stirring the emotions. Cornelius Tacitus, though otherwise ever so slightly inelegant, is sharp and eloquent in his speeches;[111] Seneca is witty and elegant and even forceful in ridiculing vices.[112] But no one has written more successfully about character than Plutarch,[113] whose books deserve to be learned word for word; Basil and Chrysostom appear to have taken much from them. Among ecclesiastical writers[114] no one seems to me more successful than St Basil;[115] he is crystal clear, devout, sound, pleasantly grave and gravely pleasant, with not a trace of verbose affectation.

* * * * *

106 See Quintilian 10.1.101: 'His [Livy's] speeches are eloquent beyond description; so admirably adapted is all that is said both to the circumstances and the speaker; and as regards the emotions, especially the more pleasing of them, I may sum him up by saying that no historian has ever depicted them to greater perfection.' On speeches in Livy, see Kennedy 420–7.

107 Many speeches in Livy are delivered by generals addressing their troops and explaining the military or political situation. Erasmus' point here is that Livy does not always report speeches to the army, etc, but often instead gives a strategic analysis of the situation, much as a speech might do. (Translator's note)

108 The Greek word ἦθος is one of two classes of emotions central to establishing faith with one's audience; see Quintilian's discussion of this and of its counterpart πάθος: Quintilian 6.2.8–36. Erasmus uses the Latin word *mores*.

109 See Quintilian 10.1.85.

110 Quintilian 10.1.97–8

111 Tacitus (c AD 56–120): Quintilian does not mention Tacitus, who is his contemporary.

112 See Quintilian 10.1.125–9. Quintilian is harsh on Seneca as a stylist, but admires him, among other reasons, for his 'denunciations of vice.'

113 Plutarch (c AD 50–120), author of numerous writings, most important of which are *Lives* and *Moralia*, was a contemporary of Quintilian and is not mentioned in the *Institutio oratoria*.

114 Erasmus often speaks of the stylistic merits of Christian authors; see eg Allen Ep 2157:1–29; and *Antibarbari* CWE 23 105; *De ratione studii* CWE 24 672–5.

115 See the preface to St Basil the Great's works (c 329–70) *Basilii opera*, Allen Ep 2611 (22 February 1532), to the humanist bishop of Carpentras, Jacopo Sadoleto (1477–1547), made cardinal in 1537 by Pope Paul III. See R.M. Douglas *Jacopo Sadoleto 1477–1547: Humanist and Reformer* (Cambridge, Mass 1959). On Basil, see ODCC 166–7 (Basil, St, 'the Great'); and Philip Rousseau *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley 1994).

Athanasius[116] is marvellous in teaching, and I do not doubt that, if his sermons were extant, he would be like himself in preaching. Next to Basil is Chrysostom,[117] almost all of whose writings are popular and suited to the ears and minds of the uneducated crowd, though many have been imputed to his name that do not reflect his talent.[118] Imitating him is easy because he is freer, he repeats certain things and drives them home, and he rouses the sleepy listener with frequent rhetorical questions; but it is in no way easy to recapture Chrysostom himself. The second place of honour belongs to Gregory of Nazianzus,[119] who has much sharpness and sufficient

* * * * *

116 See 484 above. See LB VIII 327–424 for translations Erasmus made of some of Athanasius writings; see also Ep 1790, to John Longland (Basel, 3 March 1527), preface to *Lucubrationes aliquot*, where Erasmus refers to Athanasius as 'truly having that gift that Paul thinks is special in a bishop τὸ διδακτικόν [*in episcopo putat esse praecipuam*, τὸ διδακτικόν]: clear, sharp, sensible, attentive, in brief, suitable in all ways of teaching.'

117 John Chrysostom (c 347–407), patriarch of Constantinople, doctor of the Greek church, was an outstanding preacher and expositor of Scripture. Erasmus translated some of his works; see LB VIII 1–326. See also Allen Ep 2359 to Christopher of Stadion, 5 August 1530 and letter to John III (of Portugal, 24 March 1527), Ep 1800:174–204, for an analysis of his rhetoric and an idea of Chrysostom's homiletic method. See especially Ep 1800:215–19: 'If a preacher is on fire, he will soon kindle a flame in others. If he delights in what he teaches, that feeling will quickly be transmitted to the hearts of his listeners. Such were the mind and golden voice of Chrysostom . . .' See also Chomarat *Grammaire* I 461–3.

118 For Erasmus' doubts about the authenticity of some of Chrysostom's writings, see Epp 1563, 1800, 1801; Allen Ep 2359.

119 Gregory of Nazianzus (329 or 330 – 389 or 390), 'the Theologian,' one-time bishop of Constantinople and leading proponent of the Nicene and Constantinopolitan decrees. With Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, he is one of the three Cappadocian Fathers, one of the four Doctors of the Eastern church (with Chrysostom, Basil, and Gregory of Nyssa), and is considered the great champion of Trinitarian orthodoxy; Erasmus refers to him as the 'greatest of prelates' in *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 372. See Allen Ep 2493 to Duke George of Saxony (5 May 1531), preface to Gregory of Nazianzus' Thirty Orations (*D. Gregorii Nazianzeni Orationes XXX*), published in 1531 by Froben at Basel, translated by Willibald Pirckheimer (1470–22 December 1530). Gregory of Nazianzus' five theological orations (*Orationes XXVII–XXXI*) are often published separately; see eg *The Five Theological Orations of Gregory of Nazianzus* ed A.J. Mason, Cambridge Patristic Texts I (Cambridge 1899) and *Nazianzus*. On his life and for translations of some works, see Brian E. Daley, SJ *Gregory of Nazianzus* (New York 2006). For a complete list of his works, see *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* II Corpus Christianorum (Turnhout 1974) 179–209.

force whenever the matter demands it. Origen[120] used to earn first place, for he roused the minds of all the Greeks, as even Athanasius admits,[121] and did not simply rouse them but taught them as well. His writings too are largely popular, but as he calls his sermons 'homilies,' that is, conversations, his stylistic level hardly ever rises; but he is entirely occupied with teaching,[122] and he touches none of the emotions except those that the subject itself stirs, as the Atticists do. From reading him carefully, however, the preacher will acquire substantial ability in speaking. To come now to writers in Latin, Tertullian[123] is harsh though witty in confounding heretics, clever

* * * * *

120 Origen of Alexandria (c 185–c 254), presbyter, theologian, biblical scholar and exegete, was arguably the most influential Christian after St Paul. In his struggle against the Marcionite heresy, which saw the Old Testament as unrelated to the New Testament, Origen formulated the senses of Scripture (literal, moral, and allegorical) that predicated the fundamental unity of God and the two testaments. His teachings, many of which were daring yet widely influential, were condemned for their (often Platonic) incompatiblilty with the orthodox doctrines of creation, the final judgment, and the nature of Christ. Some works exist only in translation, and thus a precise knowledge of his teaching has been obscured. See Erasmus *Antibarbari* CWE 23 108, *Ratio* 295:16–21, *De ratione studii* CWE 24 673: 'Among theological writers, after the Scriptures, no one writes better than Origen ...' See the preface to the posthumous edition of *Oeuvres complètes* in LB VIII 425–40 and the following translations at 439–90. See Godin for Jean Vitrier of Saint Omer's influence on Erasmus for the study of Origen's writings; Godin *Spiritualité* and his 'De Vitrier à Origène: Recherches sur la patristique érasmienne' in *Colloquia Erasmiana* II 807–20.

121 See Athanasius *In illud: Qui dixerit verbum in filium* PG 26:649.21; for the complete text see PG 26:648C–676: Ὠριγένης ὁ πολυμαθὴς καὶ φιλόπονος.

122 For Erasmus occupation with teaching is the core of the *ecclesiastes'* ministry. The comment on Origen recalls Augustine's comment on teaching (*docere*): 'Therefore a certain eloquent man said, and said truly, that he who is eloquent should speak in such a way that he teaches, delights, and moves. Then he added, "To teach is a necessity, to please is a sweetness, to persuade is a victory." [Cicero *Orator* 21.69] Of the three, that which is given first place, that is, the necessity of teaching, resides in the things which we have to say, the other two in the manner in which we say it.' And later Augustine states, 'Sometimes, when the truth is demonstrated in speaking, an action which pertains to the function of teaching eloquence is neither brought into play nor is any attention paid to whether the matter or the discourse is pleasing, yet the matter itself is pleasing when it is revealed simply because it is true'; *De doctrina christiana* 4.12.27–8.

123 Tertullian (c 160–c 225), a North African who converted from paganism to Christianity, wrote a number of tracts in defence of Christianity; see ODCC 'Tertullian' 1591–2.

in ridiculing vices, though I wish that he sometimes stayed further from scurrility in this; but he *was* an African.[124] Hilary[125] is hardly useful for acquiring grace of speech, especially of popular speech; Cyprian[126] is more useful, being frank, forceful, serious, and not without a felicitous flow. The rhetorical style that Ambrose adopted is not so suited to this age,[127] for his cleverness and apothegms are affected, sometimes rather obscure as well, so that they approach the type that the Greeks call νοήματα [thoughts].[128]

* * * * *

124 Cf Ep 1334 to John Carondelet (5 January 1523), preface to *Hilarii opera*: 'For both Tertullian and Apuleius have a style of their own, and in the decrees of the Africans, many of which Augustine refers to against Petilianus and Cresconius, you may observe an anxious striving for eloquence, but such is their style that you recognize their African origin. Augustine also sometimes is rather obscure and laboured, nor is Cyprian entirely without African traits, although he is clearer than the others.' Chomarat observes that since antiquity African writers of Latin (eg Tertullian, Apuleius, Augustine), with the exception of Cyprian and Lactantius, were characterized by their preference for an affected style that bordered on obscurity and artificiality; ASD V-4 267 450n. See especially Ep 1000 to Lorenzo Pucci (31 July 1519), preface to *Opera Cypriani*.

125 Hilary of Poitiers (c 315–67 or 8) championed Trinitarian orthodoxy in the West against the Arians; his major work, *De Trinitate*, defended the Nicaean position and became the standard Latin exposition of the theology of the Trinity until Augustine. Hilary's teaching on the natures of Christ tended somewhat towards Monophysite Christology, but this was before the Christological definitions of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451). See DS 250–63 and 300–2; and ODCC 'Hilary of Poitiers' 769–70. In 1523 Erasmus prepared an edition of St Hilary (*Hilarii opera*); see Ep 1334 to John Carondelet, Basel, 5 January 1523. See *On the Trinity* NPNF 2nd series 9 40–233; *De trinitate* ed P. Smulders CCSL 62 and 62A; see book 3 23.

126 Cyprian, bishop of Carthage (d 258), former teacher of rhetoric, and martyr, known for his eloquence in championing the rebaptism of schismatics who had lapsed during the persecution of Decian (250). Erasmus mentions Augustine and Cyprian again below in a similar passage. See Ep 1000 to Lorenzo Pucci (31 July 1519), preface to *Opera Cipriani*. See ODCC 'St Cyprian' 441.

127 Erasmus' words are different when speaking of Ambrose in *De ratione studii* CWE 24 673: 'Among the Latin Fathers, two at least are outstanding in this field: Ambrose who is wonderfully rich in metaphors, and Jerome who is immensely learned in the sacred Scriptures.' Ambrose is one of a few authors whom Erasmus says 'should all be savoured.' See letter to Archbishop John Lasky (13 August 1527), Ep 1855:257–86, preface to the *Opera omnia*, and Chomarat *Grammaire* II 749–51.

128 See Quintilian 8.5.1–2 where he distinguishes the ancient from the modern sense of the term 'thoughts': 'But modern usage applies *sensus* to concepts of the mind, while *sententia* is applied to striking reflexions such as are more especially introduced at the close of our periods, a practice rare in earlier days,

Jerome is appropriate for acquiring every kind of speaking ability,[129] fiery in rousing the emotions, but because he was only a presbyter and not a bishop, he never exercised himself in preaching. Augustine is inventive and clever in this sort of improvisation; a devout and kindly man attributes to the nature of his nationality the fact that he is more pleasant than grave,[130] that he likes rhythmical and rhyming prose, and that he retards his hearers' thoughts with frequent digressions. Pope Gregory is simple and devout in his sermons, but in accordance with the taste of those times he likes, as Augustine did too, those phrases and clauses with similar rhythms and similar endings whose affectation would now make a preacher seem clumsy.[131] Prudentius,[132] though he wrote in verse, nonetheless manifests a good deal of Christian eloquence. Bernard[133] is a speaker more by nature than by art,

* * * * *

but carried even to excess in our own.' It is in this latter sense that Erasmus evaluates Ambrose's rhetorical style. See also Chomarat *Grammaire* II 749–51.

129 St Jerome (c 345–420), presbyter, strong proponent of the ascetical life, exegete, biblical scholar, translator of parts of the Hebrew and Greek Bible into Latin (Vulgate edition). Jerome also translated works by Origen and Didymus into Latin, wrote numerous commentaries on various books of the Bible, and composed the *De viris illustribus* on ecclesiastical writers. In 1516, Erasmus edited Jerome's *Opera* and wrote a life of Jerome, *Vita divi Hieronymi Stridonensis* (CWE 61 15–62); see the dedicatory letter to William Warham where he declares Jerome superior even to Cicero (Ep 396:115–19).

130 See also *Antibarbari* CWE 23 105, where the 'theologian, a young man but really learned,' noted that Augustine's 'style was rather obscure and involved, and very much his own, and yet this was his peculiar charm, owing to the figures of speech he liked to use.' Erasmus seems to concur in his judgment. For Erasmus' positive assessment of Augustine, see Ep 2157 to Alfonso Fonseca, Freiburg, May 1529, which is the preface to the ten-volume Froben edition of Augustine's *Opera omnia*: 'But I do not think there is another Doctor whom that rich and generous Spirit has endowed so abundantly with all his gifts as Augustine. It is as though he wanted to paint on a single canvas a picture of the model bishop ...' (221).

131 Gregory I, 'the Great,' pope 590–604. See ODCC 706–7. Erasmus says, 'Gregory's [style] we found musical and rhythmical rather than pithy, because he was forced to repeat the same phrases so as to fill out his periods' (CWE 23 105).

132 Prudentius (Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, 348–c 410), Latin poet, author of numerous hymns, such as *Cathemerinon*, *Peristephanon*, and *Psychomachia*. See ODCC 'Prudentius' 1341–2.

133 Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), abbot, *doctor mellifluus*. See CWE 23 105: 'Bernard's style of writing was choice, not unpolished, but with an ecclesiastical ring.' Erasmus was familiar with Bernard's *De consideratione*, written to Pope Eugenius III (1148), his letters, and sermons; he has high praise

witty and pleasant, yet ready to excite emotion. Many of his sermons, however, were clearly delivered before an assembly of monks, for whose use he wrote pretty much everything that he wrote. There have been others as well who have treated this kind of oratory with some success, such as Pope Leo,[134] Maximus,[135] and Fulgentius.[136] Jean Gerson[137] will help a preacher very little, at least in improving his ability to speak. He dissects everything, and this is the source of his flatness; he often affects affects, but he has felt them in himself rather than stirring them in others. By his nature Thomas[138]

* * * * *

for Bernard's *Sermones super Cantica canticorum*; see Epp 1202:17, 1206:109–10, 1334:136–7. See also ODCC 'Bernard' 192–3.

134 Leo I, the Great (pope 440–61), is highly regarded for the eloquence of his sermons. See *The Sermons of Pope Leo the Great* trans Jane Patricia Freeland (Washington, DC 1996). See ODCC 'Leo I, St' 966–7.

135 Chomarat takes this to be St Maximus the Confessor (c 580–662), one-time high official in the Byzantine imperial administration, who retired to become a monk in Africa, where he battled the Monothelitist and Monophysite heresies and wrote extensively on topics ranging from exegesis, liturgy, doctrine, and ascesis, and became deeply involved in contemporary theological questions. He authored commentaries on Dionysius the Areopagite and Gregory of Nazianzus. See ODCC 'Maximus the Confessor, St' 1061–2. More likely Erasmus means St Maximus of Turin (d 408–23), who left more than one hundred surviving sermons, some of which were widely diffused in medieval collections of homilies (ODCC 1061).

136 St Fulgentius (c 468–533), bishop of Ruspe in North Africa. Like Maximus the Confessor he left public life for the monastic world, where he battled the Arians, writing numerous treatises against the Arians and Pelagians. See ODCC 'Fulgentius, St' 646.

137 John Gerson (1363–1429), theologian, chancellor of the University of Paris (1395), reformer, and strong proponent of conciliarism at the Council of Constance (1414–18), wrote numerous theological treatises and sermons. See G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes *Jean Gerson, Apostle of Unity: His Church Politics and Ecclesiology* (Leiden 1999); and ODCC 'Gerson, Jean le Charlier de' 669–70.

138 Thomas Aquinas (1225–74), Dominican theologian, saint, and author of *Summa theologiae*. Erasmus may not have known that Thomas had preached extensively and left numerous sermons. See 'A Catalogue of St. Thomas's Works' in Étienne Gilson *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (New York c 1956) 424–30. See ODCC 'Thomas Aquinas, St' 1614–16. For a look at Thomas' preaching, see Thomas Aquinas *The Academic Sermons* trans Mark-Robin Hoogland, CP, FOC (Medieval Continuation) (Washington, DC 2010). The translator remarks: 'Over the years ... Thomas's sermons have been widely neglected. The Latin texts of some of Thomas's occasional academic sermons are not even published and so not available yet' (3); see the translator's introduction (3–20). See also J.-P. Torrell 'La pratique pastorale d'un théologien du XIIIe siècle: Thomas d'Aquin prédicateur' *Revue Thomiste* 82 (1982) 213–45.

would not have been clumsy at speaking had he exercised himself here as he did in philosophy and disputation; Scotus[139] and his ilk are useful for knowledge of ideas, useless for speaking. Afterwards there came a type of preacher suited perhaps to the theatre of his time but quite ignorant of the art [ie the art of preaching] and displaying little wisdom; from him have come down to us the sermons of the Paradise,[140] the sermons of Jordan,[141] the sermons of Voragine,[142] the sermons of Robert of Lecce,[143] etc, which have now passed into oblivion on their own so that it is no longer necessary to deter anyone from imitating them. It has indeed been said truly that no book is so bad that it is not in some respect beneficial, but since neither a man's lifetime nor his mind is sufficient for everything, it is wise to take one's example from the best.

The direction of my discourse requires that we sample some of the rhetoricians' precepts that seem appropriate to the preacher's office, something which St Augustine before us attempted in part in his work *De doctrina christiana*.[144] Even if he had omitted nothing, nevertheless the very different nature of the times demands that some things be imparted more simply and more plainly.

First of all, then, of the things that rhetoricians propound for immediate consideration – what the art is, who the artist is, the nature of the work – we gladly give up the claim of artistry, since the very men who have written about the precepts of eloquence are uncertain whether rhetoric is an art,[145]

* * * * *

139 Scotus: see n60 above.

140 'The Paradise': This reference is unknown.

141 Jordan von Quedlinburg (1300–80), Saxon Augustinian monk. See Schneyer 170; and 'Jordan of Quedlinburg' NCE 7 1032–3.

142 See 'introduction' n602 above.

143 Roberto Caracciolo da Lecce (c 1425–95), famous Franciscan preacher in Italy. See CEBR I 265–6. Erasmus later speaks disparingly of his style of preaching; see book 3 804–6. See especially Emile V. Telle 'En marge de l'eloquence sacrée aux XVe–XVIe siècles, Erasme et Fra Roberto Caracciolo' *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et Renaissance. Travaux et documents* 43.3 (1981) 449–70.

144 See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* ed and trans R.P.H. Green (Oxford and New York 1995).

145 Erasmus quickly passes over the question whether rhetoric is an art and, by extension, whether preaching is. Since Plato (or 'the anti-rhetorician Socrates'), the question whether oratory is an art has often been raised; see for example Plato *Gorgias* 462C for Socrates' comment on whether oratory is an art: 'No art at all, Polus, if I am going to give you a perfectly truthful answer.' See Lausberg §§32–52 for references to this discussion; see also Cicero *De inventione* 1.5.6: 'There is a scientific system of politics which includes many

and the greatest father of eloquence admits that the essence of the art is to conceal art.[146] But what sort of art is it that harms if it is not concealed? Though we grant that the eloquence of the sacred preacher does not depend on art, let us admit, however, that there must be some theory and method of speaking that is based on judgment and purpose,[147] and the heavenly Spirit, by whose inspiration the preacher talks, does not disdain human effort,[148] provided it be sober; as that divine orator Paul writes, 'The spirits of the prophets were subject to the prophets.'[149] We said enough in the previous book about the artist, who is the preacher, certainly so far as pertains to character and to sacred teaching. Here we shall touch a little upon his duties in speaking,[150] as well as upon the parts of his work, once we first deal briefly with the material.

The forensic type[151] is far removed from the duty of the preacher, who deals with the consciences of men, not with judges, and treats not human

* * * * *

important departments. One of these departments – a large and important one – is eloquence based on the rules of art, which they call rhetoric'; and *De oratore* 1.32.146: 'Thus eloquence is not the offspring of the art, but the art of eloquence'; and Quintilian 2.17.1–43: '... whether rhetoric is an art. Nobody of those who have laid down rules for oratory has of course doubted this: the very titles of their books, "On the Art of Rhetoric," bear witness to it, and Cicero defines "what is called rhetoric" as "artistic eloquence"' (2.17.2).

146 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.7.10: 'It is afterwards, in speaking, that the orator's skill conceals his art, so that it may not obtrude and be apparent to all.' Erasmus believed that Cicero was the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. See also Aristotle *Rhetoric* 3.2 (1404b); see 467 n4 above.

147 'Judgment and purpose' are the two fundamental principles with which every *ecclesiastes* must concern himself.

148 See book 2 470.

149 1 Cor 14:32

150 See Quintilian 3.5.2–3; and Lausberg §§61 and 1078–79.

151 Aristotle argued that all oratory fell into one of three types of speaking: forensic, deliberative, or epideictic; see *Rhetoric* 1.3–15. Quintilian follows him, as do a majority of authors on rhetoric. Erasmus, however, following Quintilian 3.4.1–16, takes up the three types of speaking (*genera dicendi*), but will consider other possible (Christian) *genera*, presumably taking a cue from Quintilian's remark, 'There is ... a dispute as to whether there are three kinds or more' (3.4.1). Erasmus finds these other *genera* in Paul, especially 2 Tim 3:16, as he states below: 'The preacher is especially occupied with teaching, with persuading, with exhorting, consoling, advising, and admonishing'; see also 2 Tim 4:1–2: 'Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine.' Erasmus, however, will consider these specifically Christian genera as subsumed under the *genus deliberativum*.

laws but divine oracles, and does not plead the cases of certain men but accuses in general the consciences of all who live badly and assists the consciences of all who simply err or grieve or are oppressed by some grave affliction; and he is concerned not with winning over a human judge's favour for this or that accused but with winning over all alike for God.

Yet many instructions are imparted in this type, which are also useful in the suasorial type and in others, such as the fact that an argument has a main point that rhetoricians call its status.[152] This consideration will make our speech internally consistent and keep us from saying anything irrelevant and contradicting ourselves, as regularly happens to thoughtless people, with the result that the intelligent listener rightly mutters to himself Horace's words, 'A wine jug began / to be made; why does a pitcher come off the spinning wheel?'[153] Besides, it is childish and pointless just to let words fly and, as Persius says, 'Everywhere follow crows with both pot and mud.'[154] It would also be useful to know what the rhetoricians say

* * * * *

Of interest, too, is that these duties spelled out by Paul also find counterparts in the ancient Greek and Roman authors. See for example Cicero's advice on giving words of consolation to mourners in *Tusculan Disputations* 3.23.1–3.28.71. See Quintilian 2.21.23, 3.4.12–15.

152 'Status' (*status, quaestio, constitutio, caput*, στάσις) means the issue in question, the basic issue; for 'a simple cause' it is 'that point which the orator sees to be the most important for him to make and on which the judge sees that he must fix all his attention. For it is on this that the cause will stand or fall' (Quintilian 3.6.9); yet questions may have 'more *bases* than one.' Cf Quintilian 3.6.1–104; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.11.18–1.17.27; Cicero *Orator* 14.45. Each *genus* of oratory will have status proper to it. See below where Erasmus defines the term: 'A status is the essential point of a case or question, to which the speaker refers everything and which the listener has particularly in view' (581).

153 Horace *Ars poetica* 21–2.

154 Persius *Satires* 3.61: *an passim sequeris corvos testaque lutoque* ... The meaning of the Persius passage is somewhat obscure. Here Erasmus seems to caution against speaking thoughtlessly (*puerile est absque scopo iaculari*). For the metaphorical sense of *iaculor* for speaking, see OLD 'to throw a javelin, to fire or snipe (at, with abuse), to shoot at, strike (with a javelin or other missile) ... to utter rapidly.' See Quintilian 2.11.7 'Simply fire off brusque phrases as they happen to come to hand (*sed abrupta quaedam, ut forte ad manum venire, iaculantur*).' The Persius line describes an idler 'pelting crows with potsherds.' So the general sense seems to be 'it is childish to fire off without a target and, as Persius says, to aim indiscriminately at crows with potsherds and balls of mud.' (Translator's note)

about special circumstances surrounding persons and events, on which arguments and amplifications are based in every kind of case.[155] Sometimes a controversy arises over the letter and spirit of a text,[156] about seemingly contradictory passages of Scripture; also about the meaning of a word that is being sought through definition, such as when one asks what is usury, what is the Law, what is grace; or about the quality of a thing, whether it is just or unjust, such as when one asks whether Abraham acted correctly when, travelling in Gerar, he called his wife Sarah his sister and with these words somehow prostituted his wife to the king of Gerar.[157] And the conjectural status[158] concerning the intention with which Abraham did this will occur here in passing,[159] likewise whether the daughters of Lot sinned in filching offspring from their intoxicated father (this is a status of quality)[160] and, if they sinned, whether they committed incest:[161] for it is clear that Adam's offspring could not have been propagated except by the marriage of brother and sister (this is a status of definition). There are countless things of this kind in the Bible. Reasoning[162] also comes into play when there is no Scripture that clearly defines the matter in question, and the divine will is inferred instead by reasoning from the comparison of several scriptural passages. Other lines of argument (status) likewise occur, especially the comparative,[163] most frequently in a speech regarding no particular person, but often even when a particular person is designated.

* * * * *

155 On 'circumstances surrounding persons and events . . . arguments and amplifications,' see Quintilian 3.6.13–22; see also book 2 below. On amplifications, see Quintilian 2.11.6; see also book 3 773–808 where Erasmus takes up methods of amplification; and Lausberg §§329, 1102.1, 1104, 1119.5.

156 See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.11.19: 'A controversy from Letter and Spirit arises when the framer's intention appears to be at variance with the letter of the text . . .' See also Lausberg §900.

157 Gen 20:1–7

158 'Status' or 'basis' is a line of argument, a definition of the point at issue; for 'conjectural status' see Quintilian 3.6.1–104, especially 3.6.11–16. See also the extensive references to 'status' in Lausberg.

159 Gen 20:10–18

160 'Quality' (*qualitas*): one of many types of status. See Quintilian 3.6.1–104.

161 Gen 19:30–8

162 'Reasoning' (*ratiocinatio*): a rhetorical term dealing with a method of arguing from syllogisms and enthymemes. See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 2.2.2, 2.18.28, 4.16.23 and Lausberg §§357, 366, 367–72, 419.

163 'Comparative': a form of judicial status; for this and other such forms, see Quintilian 3.6.90; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.13.24.

But the preacher is especially occupied with teaching, with persuading, with exhorting, consoling, advising, and admonishing.[164] I am not unaware that teaching is common to all cases and status, but I have decided to separate it for the present purpose. For we teach so that our hearer understands,[165] such as when we show through Scripture and through arguments that God is without body, that the human soul is immortal.[166] We persuade so that our hearer wants to embrace what is honourable and useful,[167] such

* * * * *

164 These are the principal duties of the *ecclesiastes*. See 2 Tim 3:16: 'All Scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice: That the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every good work.' Here Erasmus seems to make a significant innovation, introducing what could be called uniquely biblical *genera* that either add to or significantly modify the three classical *genera* (forensic, deliberative, demonstrative). He posits that the *genera* listed by Paul are the proper domain of the *ecclesiastes* and that classical rhetorical teaching serves the infinitely greater aim that each of these *genera* intends. Yet it is somewhat unclear if Erasmus is in fact departing from Aristotle and Quintilian's position that the three *genera* are the only *genera* and that all speech falls into one of the three divisions: see Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1.3 (1358a–b), 2.21.23, 3.4.15. Quintilian, however, might have given some inspiration to Erasmus for this position; at 3.4.1–2 he states: 'Whether there are three or more of these is disputed. Of course, almost all the writers who are most authoritative among the ancients followed Aristotle, who merely changes one name and says "demegoric" [speaking to the people] instead of "deliberative," and were happy with this division. However, even in those days some slight attempt was made among certain Greeks (and also in Cicero's *De oratore* [2.43–71]), and an almost overwhelming argument has been advanced by the greatest authority of our own day, to prove that there are not only more than three such kinds, but that they are almost innumerable.'

165 See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.12.27: 'Thus he who speaks when he would teach cannot think that he has said what he wished to say to the person he wishes to teach so long as that person does not understand him.'

166 ' God is without body' and 'the human soul is immortal' represent some of 'the necessary things' (*res necessariae*) the *ecclesiastes* is obliged to teach. See book 4 where Erasmus expounds the content of preaching: 'the necessary things' and 'vices and virtues' (1041, 1046–55). See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.12.28, who understands that 'instruction' in 'the necessary things' 'should come before persuasion.'

167 'Honourable and useful' (*honestum et utile*); see Cicero *De officiis*, which deals extensively with the relationship between 'the morally good' (*honestum*) and 'the beneficial' (*utile*), especially 2.3.9–10; and Quintilian 3.8.1–3, 11.1.8–14. See also Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.25.55. For Erasmus' treatment of this, see 547–9 below.

as when we persuade a wealthy miser to share his riches with the needy. By exhortation we give courage to those who are persuaded but are listless or fearful, so that they have the courage to approach what they know is right, such as when we urge the worried to scorn the aid of this world and commit themselves to God with all their trust. We console so that they bear with patience and even with eagerness the troubles of this life. We advise the perplexed when we show them the way to acquire tranquillity of conscience. We admonish either by criticism or by entreaty. These were the discussions that the early Christians had among themselves.

That leaves the encomiastic type,[168] which is partly taken up in doxology and thanksgiving, partly in the praise of the devout, especially of the martyrs who have glorified God by their death. Once the congregation used to meet on certain days just for δοξολογία [glorification] (for so the Greeks call it) and thanksgiving. There the preacher or bishop would extol in magnificent words the divine goodness towards all creatures, and the people would sing to the Lord in hymns and spiritual songs.[169] Some psalms of this sort survive, as well as the hymn of the three boys in the furnace in imitation of them,[170] and likewise certain songs created by later generations, among them the one that is sung on Palm Sunday in imitation of the Hebrew boys,[171] and another one that is sung on the spring holy day,[172] and finally one that is now sung almost every day in mass in imitation of the angels that sang at Christ's birth, 'Glory to God in the

* * * * *

168 See Quintilian 3.4.12–13; Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1.9 (1366a–1368a); *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.6.10–3.8.15.

169 Eph 5:19; Col 3:16

170 The Song of the Three Young Men 29–68 (Vulg Dan 3:51–90)

171 'The Hebrew boys' (*pueri Hebraeorum*): the sequence in Gregorian chant sung after the Epistle on Palm Sunday (*Gloria, laus et honor tibi sit, rex Christe redemptor*).

172 'Spring holy day' (*feriae vernis*) refers presumably to Easter Sunday, the feast of the resurrection of Jesus. The sequence for this feast is the *Victimae paschali laudes* composed by the Burgundian monk Wipo (after 1046) and sung throughout Easter week; Erasmus might also be referring to the *Salve festa dies* by Venantius Fortunatus. If referring to hymns for Palm Sunday, he probably has in mind Theodulf of Orleans' *Gloria, laus et honor tibi sit, rex Christe redemptor*. Chomarat suggests that Erasmus might be referring to the feast of the Ascension with its vespers hymn *Salutis humanae sator, Iesu voluptas cordium*, or the hymn *Iam sol recedit igneus* sung at vespers for the feast of Corpus Christi (ASD V-4 273 559n). Erasmus might also be referring to Pentecost Sunday and its sequence *Veni sancte spiritus*, composed by Rabanus Maurus (776–856).

highest.'[173] Hymns were added, which are now all combined with prayers. Among them those of Ambrose[174] have the highest repute (if only many ignorant, not to say insane, ones had not been added!); there are some of this sort that consist only of prayers. To these was added the prose [*prosa*], which they call the sequence. I admit that some of this sort are learned and devout, but many more are awkward and unworthy of divine worship. Though the Roman church does not admit this part, it has allowed them to Germans and French, who are fond of singing, who like these additional ones so much that the important ones are passed over for their sake. The Credo is curtailed, the Lord's Prayer is not heard, and the singing of a sequence,[175] which no one understands, detains the congregation for an entire half-hour. Sung *caudae* are added, which are equal to the singing itself or longer.[176] Another practice that we see accepted among the early Christians is for a deceased patron or emperor to be praised in church publicly from the priest's mouth,[177] in the same way that distinguished men were praised publicly before the people in a funeral oration. Ambrose's two funeral orations, one in praise

* * * * *

173 Ie 'the Gloria' (*Gloria in excelsis Deo*), which was taken partly from Luke 2:14 and sung after the introit and Kyrie eleison and before the collect.

174 St Ambrose (339–97), bishop of Milan, composed many hymns, although the number of hymns known to be authentically his is quite small. Erasmus' parenthetical remark likely refers to the many hymns attributed to Ambrose that are certainly not his compositions. See Marie-Hélène Jullien 'Les sources de la tradition ancienne des quatorze hymnes attribuées à Saint Ambroise de Milan' *Revue d'histoire des textes* 19 (1989) 57–189; *Ambroise de Milan: hymnes* ed, trans, ann J.-L. Charlet et al, under direction of Jacques Fontaine (Paris 1992); Helmut Leeb *Die Psalmodie bei Ambrosius* (Vienna 1967); and 'Ambrose' ODCC 49–50.

175 A sequence is a liturgical hymn sung on special feast days after the Alleluia of the mass. See ODCC 1484 'Sequence': 'Originally the word seems to have denoted a purely melodic extension of the word "Alleluia," sung to its final vowel; during the ninth century a custom arose of providing a syllabic text (usually called a *prosa*) for the melody. In due course the term *sequentia* came to be applied to the resulting musical-textual entity, and hence eventually to the text alone, and in this sense its English equivalent has gained widespread currency.'

176 Erasmus is talking about a kind of troping, ie adding text to existing notes, or new notes, or adding new notes and text; he complains that sung codas, or codas for voices, are now added that are as long or longer than the sung sequences. I thank T. Frank Kennedy, SJ for his assistance with this.

177 For funeral eulogies at this time, see John M. McManamon, *Funeral Oratory and the Cultural Ideals of Italian Humanism* (Chapel Hill, NC 1989). For encomia in the ancient world, see especially Pliny *Panegyricus*.

of the emperor Theodosius, the other in praise of Valentinian,[178] show this; the Nazianzen's monody in praise of St Basil shows this,[179] as well as some homilies of Chrysostom;[180] and if we believe the book about the death of the most Blessed Virgin,[181] she was celebrated by the encomia of all the apostles present. Likewise the book entitled Ecclesiasticus pronounces the praises of outstanding men, but only those whose devotion is commended in holy writings.[182] In fact the Lord himself rebukes the Jews with Abraham's example;[183] Peter invites matrons to imitate Sarah.[184] St Augustine was set afire for Christ by hearing of Antony,[185] who had then recently occupied everyone's tongue and ears. For the holy are a good odour to God in every place, but also a deadly odour to the wicked,[186] just as ointment of marjoram gives men marvellous delight, though, as the writer says, it is also a bitter poison to swine.[187] Therefore, just as I deem that encomia of certain famous men are not altogether to be condemned so long as there is no all too human prejudice or ambitious rivalry (and I add vanity as well), so I think that

* * * * *

178 See these orations in *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose* trans Leo P. McCauley et al FOC 22 (New York c 1953) 263–332.

179 For Gregory of Nazianzus' funeral oration for Basil, see: *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose* trans Leo P. McCauley et al FOC 22 (New York c 1953) 27–99.

180 See John Chrysostom *Homilia*: *De beato Philogonio* PG 48 747–56, *De s. Meletio Antiocheno* PG 50 515–20, *In Eutropium* PG 52 391–6. See also *Two Homilies on Eutropius* NPNF 1st series 9 243–65.

181 Chomarat identifies this as the *Transitus Mariae*, an apocryphal text dating from the fourth or fifth century. See the text in *Marianum* 32 (1970) 279–87. Much later, scholars attributed the earliest known source of this apocryphal tradition to St Melito, bishop of Sardis (d c 180). It could also be the *Cogitis me o Paula et Eustochium* of Paschasius Radbertus, which was sung as an antiphon for the feast of the Assumption; this work, according to Erasmus, was falsely ascribed to St Jerome. See CWE 61 74 and PG 5 (1857) 1231–40. See also E. Ann Matter *The Voice of My Beloved* (Philadelphia 1990) 152–9.

182 Ecclus 44:1–50:29 and 51 ('Prayer of Jesus Son of Sirach')

183 John 8:39

184 1 Pet 3:6

185 *Confessions* 8.6.14. Augustine speaks of Athanasius' immensely popular *Vita Antonii* (written between 356–62), which extolled the heroic virtues of this young man who after hearing the words of the Gospel, 'Go, sell what you have ... come follow me,' went off to the Egyptian desert to live as a hermit.

186 2 Cor 2:15

187 See *Adagia* I iv 38 *Nihil cum amaracino sui* 'A pig has nothing to do with marjoram,' where Erasmus discusses the comments of ancient authors on marjoram; eg Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 19 (preface); Pliny *Naturalis historia* 13.1.5, 21.93.163.

our preachers should be rather sparing in their imitation of an example that the bishops of old derived from a public custom of the heathen. In general, one should instruct the speaker not to dwell on that end that the rhetoricians prescribe, namely for the audience to have only a high opinion of the person we are commending, but to direct everything towards the target of rousing them to imitate right deeds. But enough has been said, at least so far as the present passage is concerned, about the materials that the preacher receives; for we shall deal with particulars somewhat more expansively in their place.

It follows that we should speak with equal brevity about the preacher's duties. But before we get down to parts, to put it briefly, the speaker should aim to teach, to delight, to bend.[188] By teaching we cause something to be understood and made persuasive; that happens particularly in the narration and in the argumentation,[189] and likewise in the peroration. If it does not happen, the rest is superfluous, for no one is delighted or moved by what he does not understand or does not believe. What I have said about delighting is taken in two ways. For speech has a certain pleasantness, or rather grace, which is spread throughout the body just like blood; so a healthy man is more pleasant than an ailing one, a young man than an old one, a handsome man than an ugly one. In addition, nature herself has given to certain people a special pleasantness of both character and speech; for instance, you sense something charming and witty in Bernard's writings,[190] in Hilary[191] a more severe talent. A similar difference is to be noticed between Hilarion[192] and Benedict:[193] the former is merry everywhere, the latter grim. There is another

* * * * *

188 See Cicero *Orator* 21.69; Cicero uses *probare* 'prove,' not *docere* 'teach.' Erasmus speaks here of the orator's duty, which lay in winning over the audience (persuasion). The ancient authors divided this persuasion into three aims: teaching (*docere*), delighting (*delectare*), and moving (*movere*); see Quintilian 12.10.59. 'Moving' (*movere*) is sometimes rendered as 'turning' or 'bending' (*flectare*); see Cicero *De oratore* 2.52: 'in order to transform men's feelings or influence [*flectendos*] them in any desired way . . .'; and Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.12.27.

189 Erasmus addresses here the type of speech appropriate to each of the duties of the orator. Echoing Quintilian, Erasmus states that teaching is employed in narrating the facts of the case; see Quintilian 4.2 and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.3.4.

190 Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153)

191 Hilary of Poitiers (c 315–67 or 8)

192 Hilarion of Gaza (c 291–371). Erasmus seems to speak here of the character of Hilarion (as presented in Jerome's *Vita S. Hilarionis* (*Life of Hilarion*) NPNF 2nd series 6 303–15), as there are no extant writings of Hilarion.

193 Benedict of Norcia (c 480–c 550), author of *Regula Benedicti* (*The Rule of Benedict*) and father of Benedictine monasticism. As with Hilarion, Erasmus speaks of the character of Benedict, which is given by Pope Gregory I (590–604) in the

pleasantness that the argument itself specially requires, since happy events that call for thanksgiving are to be described in more agreeable words than are appropriate for sad themes, for example if someone had undertaken to describe the great felicity of the angels and the devout souls in heaven as they contemplate the face of the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, or the life that the devout are to have after the resurrection, or if someone were announcing a sure and lasting peace to a congregation oppressed by incessant warfare. There is a third kind that delights the hearer with wit and charming words and sometimes even provokes laughter, whence they are called γελοῖα [amusing, ludicrous][194] by the Greeks; Cicero in *De oratore* II[195] and Quintilian in his chapter *On Laughter*[196] give many instructions about these, but I leave it to others to determine whether this is appropriate for our preacher. There is no such example in the Bible unless we wish to include irony among jokes.[197] For example, in Kings Elijah says to the priests of Baal, 'Shout with a louder voice, for it is God, and perhaps he is talking, or is in an inn, or on a journey, or surely he is asleep, so that he may be wakened';[198] but this is an obvious case of scoffing, not a joke. Likewise you might perhaps find some in the New Testament, but nowhere jokes; for example, some think that the Lord's words to the three disciples, 'Sleep now and rest,'[199] were said ironically, and likewise those to the Pharisees, 'You give charity, and everything is clean for you.'[200] What Paul writes to the Corinthians can seem such, 'We are foolish because of Christ, you, however, are wise in Christ. We are weak but you strong, you noble but

* * * * *

second book of *Dialogi* (*Dialogues*); see Gregory the Great *Life and Miracles of St. Benedict: book two of the Dialogues* trans Odo J. Zimmermann and Benedict R. Avery (Westport, Conn c 1949).

194 From the Greek word 'to laugh' (γελᾶν); see Quintilian 6.3.22.

195 *De oratore* 2.54.218: 'There being two sorts of wit, one running with even flow all through a speech, while the other, though incisive, is intermittent, the ancients called the former "irony" [*cavillatio*] and the latter "raillery" [*dicacitas*].'

196 Quintilian 6.3

197 Erasmus raised this question in *Ratio* 271.

198 1 Kings 18:27

199 Matt 26:45. See *Annotationes in Matthaeum* ASD VI-5 328. For Erasmus' handling of this passage, which had somewhat baffled Valla, Origen, Chrysostom, Hilary, and Jerome, see Jerry H. Bentley 'Biblical Philology and Christian Humanism: Lorenzo Valla and Erasmus as Scholars of the Gospels' *Sixteenth Century Journal* 8 Supplement (1977) 9–28, especially 24.

200 Luke 11:41. See *Paraphrasis in Lucam 11–24* CWE 48 21–2.

we base.'[201] Such is the kind of jesting used by Cyprian against idolaters,[202] as well as by the others who have hissed off and ridiculed the vanity of the heathen, such as Tertullian,[203] Lactantius,[204] Prudentius,[205] and Augustine;[206] for some things are better refuted by mockery than by argument. St Jerome allows himself even greater licence against heretics,[207] but not only against them, being in this regard more like Tertullian than I should wish, and indeed it is no secret that the preachers of old made a considerable effort to delight the people. Secular rhetoricians, especially Quintilian[208] and Tacitus,[209] complain that men's characters were once so depraved that jurors, not content with learning what pertained to the case, sought to be delighted by an orator; if this did not happen, they felt that they had been insulted, not without risk to the case. In addition, the common people at the time were accustomed to theatrical plays and mimes, which were all performed for pleasure's sake; there the people as spectators played judge with whistles, stamping of feet, thumbs, applause, and acclamations. Significant traces of this custom long remained among Christians, so that bishops were forced to make great allowance for the ears of the common folk. Yet those who roused the applause of the ignorant multitude with fictitious stories or foolish jokes were celebrated; now, however, though theatrical customs have been expelled from the churches, there is still no lack of those who too frequently, not to say shamelessly, imitate the story that is told concerning Demosthenes, who roused his sleepy judges in a capital case by unexpectedly bringing in a joke about the shadow of an ass.[210] Even supposing the story to be true, Demosthenes did once in court what those men do almost every day in church,[211] and what they intrude is not just laughable but sometimes

* * * * *

201 1 Cor 4:10
202 See Cyprian, *On the Vanity of Idols* (*Quod idola dii non sint*) ANF V 465–9, especially 467.
203 See eg Tertullian *Apologeticum* and *Adversus nationes*. See Ep 1000:92–5.
204 See eg Lactantius *Institutiones divinae* books 1–3.
205 See eg Prudentius *Contra Symmachum*.
206 See Augustine, especially *De civitate Dei* 1–7.
207 See eg Jerome's treatises *Adversus Helvidium de Mariae virginitate perpetua*, *Adversus Iovinianum*, *Adversus Vigilantium* (*Against Helvidius, Against Jovinianus*, *Against Vigilantius*) NPNF 2nd series 6 334–46, 346–416, 417–23.
208 Cf Quintilian 4.1.57.
209 See Tacitus *Dialogus de oratoribus* 20–6.
210 See *Adagia* I iii 52 *De asini umbra*. Pseudo-Plutarch *Moralia* 848A–B in *Demosthenes*; *Lingua* CWE 29 262.
211 Erasmus might have in mind here the work of Johannes Oecolampadius *De risu paschali* (Basel: Johannes Froben 1518), which criticized the introduction of hu-

foolish, fit for old women and hardly modest, with no consideration of those before whom they speak or of the place or of their theme. Out of a great many I shall offer one or two examples, which I have witnessed myself.

A certain Franciscan,[212] a man revered by the whole congregation for the holiness of his life, was talking after lunch in a nunnery about modesty. When he saw that some laymen were asleep, he said, 'Please wake up; I will tell you a pretty story. A certain husband who lived in the country instructed his wife on his departure abroad to ensure during his absence that on his return home he should find everything exactly as he wished it. Then she said, "My husband, give whatever instruction you wish; you will find your wife obliging in all respects." At this point the husband said, "I prescribe nothing, light of my life, except one thing, and quite an easy one to do." "What is it?" "That you never wash your face with this water," showing her a small pool of foul and ill-smelling water by the dungheap. Whenever the good wife passed by in her husband's absence, her heart was troubled, wondering why her husband had bothered to forbid this one thing, and she could only convince herself that it was something serious. To make a long story short, temptation won out, she washed – that is to say, she stained – her face; she looked into the mirror, was appalled with herself, and over several days could scarcely wash out the stink and discolouration. The husband on his return finds his wife rather glum and like an angry woman; "Is anything wrong?" he asks. Finally, unable to control her anger, she complains about his warning concerning the water and relates the outcome. "And so, did you wash? But this was the very reason why I had told you not to wash,

* * * * *

morous stories in sermons given at Eastertide. See Michael O'Connell 'Mockery, Farce, and *Risus Paschalis* in the York *Christ before Herod*' in Wim Hüsken, Leif Sondergaard, and Konrad Schoel *Farce and Farcical Elements* Ludus 6, Series in Mediaeval & Early Renaissance Theatre & Drama (Amsterdam and New York 2002) 45–58, especially 51–3. See also Maria Caterina Jacobelli *Il Risus paschalis e il fondamento teologico del piacere sessuale* (Brescia 1991); and 'From Glad Tidings to the "Risus Paschalis": The Easter Play and Ritualistic Laughter' in Rainer Warning *The Ambivalences of Medieval Religious Drama* trans Steven Rendall (Stanford 2001) 100–12.

212 This reference is to the Franciscan theologian and preacher Jean Vitrier (c 1456–1521) of Saint-Omer, whom Erasmus greatly admired as a teacher and a friend; ASD V-4 277 651n. See Erasmus' profile of the Franciscan Jean Vitrier in his Ep 1211 to Justus Jonas, 13 June 1521. See also *Erasme: Vies de Jean Vitrier et de John Colet* trans and ann André Godin, introduction by Jean-Claude Margolin (Angers 1982); Godin *Spiritualité* especially 46–7 and n141; Godin; and Ep 1211:13–247. See also James D. Tracy *Erasmus of the Low Countries* (Berkeley 1996) 32–3.

so that what happened wouldn't happen to you."' After telling this story he returned to his praise of modesty, an angelic virtue. The good man, who had been taught this way by someone, was wrong, but would change his habit, I think, if some friend had advised him of the inappropriateness of what he was doing; for he was not a hypocrite.

As a boy I heard a certain Dominican who was endowed with an outstanding native grace of tongue. In order to rouse sleepers, he told this story, not without a hint of naughtiness. 'A certain nun,' he said 'was shown by the swelling of her belly to have had relations with a man. In an assembly of nuns she was severely rebuked by the superior, whom they call an abbess, for having disgraced the holy community in this way. She pleads the excuse of force, saying, "A young man entered my room, stronger than I; it would have been useless for me to resist him. Besides, force is not reckoned a crime." Then the superior said, "You could be excused if you had shouted, as Scripture advises." Here the maiden said, "I would have done that, but it happened in the dormitory, where breaking silence was forbidden."' But enough! lest in rebuking foolishness, I become foolish myself.

It is more tolerable that some use noise or a shout to waken the sleepers, some even the throat clearing of the whole congregation, which they require to be done at each part of their address. But it is more shameless that some, as if by custom, bring laughter to their congregation at Easter time with obviously invented stories, many of them even obscene, of a sort that an honourable man could not bear to tell without shame even at a party. This is hardly the sort of joy to which the Easter Psalm invited when it said, 'This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.'[213] It is the more absurd that this happens because those things do not arise naturally but are inserted, or rather shoved in, abruptly. Some jests of the ancients have a serious and wholesome message; it will sometimes be possible to insert them appropriately, so long as it is done rather sparingly and without an appearance of affectation, and not without apologizing for combining the human with the divine. But the things that bring a pleasure laudable and worthy of the church will be discussed in their place; here I shall only advise in passing that, if the preacher thinks it necessary to introduce a lighter touch, he should not consider it enough to draw the lips apart in a grin,[214] as Horace says, but should judge everything by its usefulness to the

* * * * *

213 Ps 118:24 (Vulg 117:24). These are the words of the gradual at Easter (*Haec dies, quam fecit Dominus: exultemus, et laetemur in ea*).

214 Horace *Satires* 1.10.7–8: 'Hence it is not enough to make your hearer grin with laughter' (*ergo non satis est risu diducere rictum / auditoris*).

hearer,[215] striving in every way to render most pleasant to his audience that which is most wholesome. They think that the special power of eloquence lies in the fact that it bends, that is, that it carries the hearers' emotions wherever it will; this will be discussed when we come to emotions.

Now we shall run through the particular tasks of the orator, but bear in mind that we are training a herald of the divine word, not a courtroom advocate. Everyone can reel them off: they are invention, arrangement, expression, memory, and delivery.[216] Invention, which supplies the subject matter,[217] though really it embraces both expression and order: it is in a speech what bones are in an animal's body, that which must be firm to keep all the rest from collapsing. Arrangement or order: this is in a speech what sinews are in an animal's body, joining the parts of the speech properly, inasmuch as order not only makes a speech harmonious but also assists the audience's capacity to learn and the speaker's memory, since we both learn more easily and remember better what is said in coherent order than what is said in a scattered and confused manner; in fact the place in which everything is said is quite important for persuading, since some things are not rightly entrusted to minds that have not already been prepared. Plus expression, which supplies words and figures suited to the subject: this is in a speech what flesh and skin are in the body, giving a seemly cloak to the bones and sinews. Even the Bible has its own charm and attractiveness, though unacquainted with pretence and allurements.[218] 'But what corresponds to memory?' you will say: breath, that is, life, without whose presence everything collapses. Performance, like delivery and movement, is proper to a living creature; without its addition an animal will be no different from a statue, and so delivery and movement are like the life of life; for even though we admit that Demosthenes was excessive in attributing

* * * * *

215 'Usefulness' (*utilitas*) is of primary importance (ie 'everlasting happiness') for the preacher and must direct all his energies. Erasmus takes this up below. On *utilitas*, see Lausberg §§233–6.

216 These are the so-called 'five tasks (*officia*) of oratory.' Quintilian devotes extensive writing to each of these tasks; see Quintilian 3.3.1–15; books 4–6 (invention); book 7 (arrangement); books 8–10 (expression); book 11 (memory); book 12 (performance). See also *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.2.3: 'The speaker ... should possess the faculties of Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory, and Delivery'; Cicero *Orator* 14.43–19.61, *De partitione oratoria* 1.7.26.

217 The distinction between 'things' (*res*) and 'words' (*verba*) is fundamental: things refer to ideas, words to their expression. See Quintilian 3.5.1; see especially Augustine *De doctrina christiana* books 2–4.

218 Cf Augustine *De doctrina christiana* book 4.

first, second, and third place to delivery,[219] yet it cannot be denied that a speech delivered in the same tone and with a single gesture, or rather with no gesture, is a thing half-dead.

Nor would a preacher be helped much by what is taught about the parts of the work, the exordium, the narration, the division, the confirmation, the refutation, and the conclusion,[220] except that these too will give a wise man the opportunity to become wiser.[221]

For the very majesty of the Scriptures that the preacher is expounding and their exceptional importance (since they deal with everlasting happiness)[222] spontaneously attract attention, a readiness to be taught and a receptive attitude, especially among Christians. But if a courtroom orator foregoes an exordium whenever the case does not demand it and the usual aim of the exordium is already achieved,[223] why then are our contemporaries so foolish as never to ascend the pulpit unless they have an exordium that is carefully prepared and, what is most absurd, extremely remote from the subject, so that it is a new speech rather than an exordium, and they think that the more remote the exordium is the better it is. But experts commend an exordium that is taken from the heart of the case and is, so far as possible, proper to the theme, or at least appropriate and fitting. It is unnecessary to report examples of a faulty exordium here; they are too commonplace, and the memory of anyone who is in the habit of hearing sermons frequently will supply them in abundance. I myself have heard someone who used the same exordium to preach every day throughout the whole of Lent. The Virgin Mother was being praised on three accounts, for example

* * * * *

219 For this saying of Demosthenes, see Cicero *De oratore* 3.56.213, *Brutus* 38.142, *Orator* 17.56; Quintilian 11.3.6; Plutarch *Moralia* 845B in *Lives*; Erasmus *Apophthegmata* CWE 37 452, *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 411.

220 For the 'parts [or 'divisions'] of the oration,' see Cicero *De partitione oratoria* 2.8.27–59; Quintilian 4–6; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.3.5–17, 1.27, and 2. Erasmus begins here to instruct his readers on applying these traditional 'parts of oratory' to preaching; he begins with the exordium. For this see especially Quintilian 4.1.1; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.4; Cicero *De inventione* 1.20.

221 These parts of the speech pertain for the most part to judicial oratory, which Erasmus does not find of particular value to the preacher, except in so far as they are 'not much different from this sort when he speaks from his pulpit against Jews, heretics or schismatics or even pagans.' See 545 n404 and 585.

222 See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.18.35: 'Everything we say, especially when speaking before the people, must be referred not to the temporal welfare of man but to his eternal welfare and to the avoidance of eternal punishment, so that everything we say is of great importance . . .'

223 Cf Quintilian 4.1.72–9.

because holy, because a virgin, because prophetic; and every day he had a new set of three, as a result of which he had to devise many such sets, and inevitably some of these were feeble and contrived. It was a pious act to exalt and venerate the Mother of Christ, but what had this to do with a time of penitence?

The practice by which men of more recent times begin a sermon from some line or other of Scripture (they call it a theme)[224] is not inappropriate provided it is of such a sort as to embrace the whole of the subject and has been taken from the actual passage that he is interpreting. Every speech must have a beginning – for example, if someone trying to discourage a congregation from rash oaths and perjury were to propose as exordium the words 'Let your speech be yes, yes, no, no,'[225] since the purpose of the whole discussion is to create such good faith and such honesty among Christians that there would never be need of an oath; or if someone trying to rebuke those who violate the teaching of charity (the greatest of all virtues)[226] for the sake of human ceremonies were to choose Christ's words, 'The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath';[227] or if someone trying to warn his congregation to beware of hypocrites and heretics should pick, 'By their fruits you will know them'[228] – since it is an easy step from such exordia to treating the whole theme. But here too there are some who think that anything simple and unaffected shows a lack of learning, and so they strive to recall a phrase as remote as possible from their purpose, or at least farfetched, or words that are twisted to an utterly foreign meaning and signify something far different in their context.

* * * * *

224 Erasmus refers to the 'thematic sermon,' which begins with a brief statement of the 'theme,' often a passage of Scripture, which is commonly broken down into two or three parts. The thematic sermon, or scholastic sermon, was the principal form preachers used throughout the Middle Ages and into Erasmus' time. For thematic sermons, see: Marianne G. Briscoe *Artes praedicandi* and Barbara H. Jaye *Artes orandi* (Turnhout 1992); Th.-M. Charland *Artes praedicandi: contribution á l'histoire de la rhétorique au môyen age* (Paris and Ottawa 1936). See also Étienne Gilson 'Michel Menot'; Thomas Worcester 'Chapter One: Catholic Sermons' in *Preachers and People in the Reformations and Early Modern Period* ed Larissa Taylor (Leiden 2001) 3–33; and Marian Michèle Mulchahey *'First the Bow is Bent in Study –': Dominican Education before 1350* (Toronto 1998), chapter 6 'Preaching Aids: Sermon Collections, Florilegia, *Exempla*, and Artes' (400–79). For more on the thematic sermon, see the introduction CWE 67 106–8.

225 Matt 5:37

226 See 1 Cor 13:13.

227 Mark 2:27. This passage is virtually a slogan of Erasmus in regard to abstinence, fasting, etc.

228 Matt 7:16

Take as an example of the first someone trying to urge towards Christian caution and thoughtfulness, and employing the words from the Epistle of St Peter, 'Be thoughtful and be watchful in prayer':[229] that passage commends not thoughtfulness but rather sobriety and condemns debauchery and drunkenness, whose companion is drowsiness (both things are useless for praying); or someone trying to exhort towards the monastic life and offering Paul's words, 'The world is crucified to me, and I to the world':[230] the Apostle was not a monk, at least as they are now, but wants all Christians to be dead to the world, which consists in feelings, not in rituals, foods, or other outward observances; or someone trying to praise the Virgin Mother and adducing, 'From the beginning and before the ages was I created':[231] that passage refers to divine wisdom, which is the Son of God, and is called 'created' not because it did not exist at some point but because it was intended for all eternity for freeing the human race.[232]

An example of the second would be if someone trying to encourage us to obey divine teaching were to propose, 'The heavens are telling the glory of God'[233] from the Psalms, for all things were created so that mankind might contemplate in them the power, wisdom, and goodness of God; therefore, since they obey divine laws and provide for so many centuries the service for which they were created, it is a disgrace that man, who was created specifically to know, love, fear, and glorify his creator, should not obey his commands.[234]

* * * * *

229 1 Pet 4:7

230 Gal 6:14

231 Ecclus 24:14

232 'Freeing the human race': Erasmus' emphatic remarks that Ecclus 24:14 does not refer to Mary the Mother of God but to the Son of God follow Thomas Aquinas *In III Sententiarum* dis 11 q 1 a 1 arg 1: 'Eccli. 24, 14: ab initio et ante saecula creata sum: et loquitur de divina sapientia. Sed filius Dei est Dei sapientia. Ergo ipse est creatura. Praeterea, omne quod est subiectum Deo, vel minus eo, est creatura. Sed filius Dei est huiusmodi, ut patet Ioan. 14, 28: pater maior me est; et 1 Corinth. 15, dicitur quod filius erit subiectus patri, qui subiecit ei omnia. Ergo filius Dei est creatura. Praeterea, hoc modo se habent actiones ad invicem, sicut termini actionum. Sed esse, quod est terminus creationis, est prius quacumque alia forma ad quam terminantur aliae actiones. Ergo creatio est prior omnibus aliis actionibus vel productionibus. Sed posterius semper praesupponit prius.' See also *Summa theologiae* I q 41 a 3 arg 4; and *In librum Boethii De trinitate* (*Super Boethium De trinitate*) q 3 a 4 arg 9.

233 Ps 19:1 (Vulg 18:2)

234 'To know, love, fear, glorify his Creator': see *De concordia* CWE 65 168, where he uses the same formulation but without 'fear': 'to know, to love, and to glorify God, his Creator, Redeemer, and Lord'; ibidem 175. The biblical basis

An example of the third is provided by someone who intended to speak about the martyrdom of Bartholomew and prefaced the passage from Habakkuk chapter 3, 'The hides of the land of Madiam will be troubled';[235] but the prophet is talking about the skins of a camp, that is, about tents, not about human skin. Two errors have been made here, in twisting the words of Scripture to an utterly foreign sense and in applying them to a fictional story,[236] which the church has rejected.

I am not inclined here to relate stories that betray the rashness of certain men who are said to have made silly jests in their exordium. I shall mention one as an example of the rest. One man leapt half-awake from his nightly carousing on to the pulpit, with the intention of expounding the death of the Lord; for some think that even this is learned and clever. He made his start with these words, as if taken from Paul, 'They and I are drunkards,'[237] speaking of himself and his fellow drinkers. That he was a Frenchman[238] is clear from the fact that that nation pronounces *Hebraei* [Hebrews] with the

* * * * *

for this fear is Isa 11:2–3 'And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness [*pietas*, εὐσεβεία]. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord [*dei timor*, φόβος θεοῦ]. He shall not judge according to the sight of the eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of the ears'; and Ps 34 [33] 11 'Come, ye children, harken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord.' See especially Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 2.7.9: 'Before all it is necessary that we be turned by the fear of God (*dei timor*) towards a recognition of his will, so that we may know what he commands us to seek and avoid. And that fear will arouse the thought of our mortality and our coming death and as it were, like flesh nailed to the wood of the cross, it will fix all stirrings of pride. After that we need to grow meek with piety (*pietas*) . . . And after these two steps of fear and piety we come to the third step of knowledge (*scientia*) . . .' See also Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* II–IIae q 8 a 6; Ambrose *De officiis* 1.1.1.

235 Hab 3:7. See *Moria* CWE 27 146–7; and CWE 28 486–7 n563, where 'Jordan of Quedlinburg, the Augustinian hermit and mystic who died in 1370 or 1380' is suggested as the possible source of this exegetical error because of his misinterpretation of the word 'tent' (*pellium* 'made of skins') as 'human skin.' See above n141. See also *Ratio* 287 where Erasmus uses the same example.

236 The account of St Bartholomew's life, found in *Legenda aurea* (*The Golden Legend* or *Lives of the Saints*) by Jacopo daVaragine, gives various reports of his death. Dorotheus says he was crucified, head downward; Theoderus says he was flayed, others that he was crucified, then flayed, then beheaded.

237 2 Cor 11:22: *Hebraei sunt et ego Israhelitae sunt et ego semen Abrahae sunt et ego.*

238 Chomarat notes that in *De recta pronuntiatione* Erasmus puts the French in the lowest rank for pronunciation of Latin; ASD V-4 283 792n; CWE 26 472. See also Erasmus' comments on the 'barbarous' French language in *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 320.

accent on the first syllable so that it is almost the same as *ebrii* [drunkards]. But as he made his customary repetition of his exordium, he started to wake up and realized his mistake, and then with remarkable skill gave the following twist to his accidental remark: how great a drunkenness gripped the Jews when they plotted death for Christ the Lord. But our preacher should be free not only of all appearance of buffoonery but also of whatever is foolish, affected, and harsh. The man who wishes to be witty should find other ways to err instead, since buffoonery should be excluded outright from the whole life of Christians.

Furthermore, this method of starting from the words of Scripture is not unexampled among the ancients. St Basil, when preparing to exhort a congregation to placate an angry God,[239] began, 'The lion has roared, and who will not fear? God has spoken, and who will not prophesy?'[240] Likewise, in an exhortation to fasting,[241] he starts, 'Sound the trumpet on Zion on the glorious day of your solemnity.'[242] Sometimes Origen[243] and Chrysostom[244] do the same. And it is not always necessary that the subject chosen for the exordium should come from the passage of Scripture that the preacher is undertaking to interpret; it is enough for it to square with it. Basil, for example, applies the passage at Joel 2 and from Psalm 80 about the Jewish fast to the customary five days' fast,[245] which seems to have been adopted by some churches at the time; and to the Jewish trumpets, however clear their sound, he far prefers the prophetic voice, which now sounds not only on Zion but even throughout the entire world, summoning to a true, Christian fast.

Sometimes citing the scriptural passage together with praise of its author and commendation of its sentiment is useful for catching the attention of the listener. For example, 'Paul, that greatest teacher of the church, or rather not Paul but the Holy Spirit through Paul's mouth, shows us an easy and simple way to eternal happiness: if God handed over his only Son for us, how is it possible for him not to give us everything together with him?';[246] or thus, 'Whoever of you grieve because either burdened with sins

* * * * *

239 Basil *Homilia dicta tempore famis et siccitatis* PG 31 (1857) 304–28 (304)
240 Amos 3:8
241 Basil *De ieiunio homilia* 1 PG 31 (1857) 164–84 (164)
242 Joel 2:1, 15 and Ps 80:4
243 See eg Origen *In Genesim homiliae* XVI, *Homiliae* 1 and 10 PG 12 (1862) 145–61, 215–20; and *Homiliae in Leviticum* XVI, *Homilia* 5 PG 12 (1862) 446–66.
244 See eg John Chrysostom *Expositio in Psalmum 49* PG 55 (1862) 240–58.
245 Basil *De ieiunio homilia* 1 PG 31 (1857) 181D: τῶν πέντε ἡμερῶν.
246 Cf Rom 8:31–2.

or worn down by afflictions, harken to a comforter who is not a man but the Lord himself declaring in his sweet voice, "Come to me all you who labour and are burdened, and I shall refresh you."'[247]

Therefore, just as those who produce a passage of Scripture for their exordium are acting properly so long as they do it appropriately, so we should not agree at all with those who think it incorrect to begin in some other way, for circumstances frequently occur that make it useful to begin otherwise.[248] For example, when he is about to speak on Milo's behalf,[249] Cicero does not secure the attention, the interest, and the good will of the jurors immediately, but first allays their fear; similarly in Acts Peter does not begin immediately with Joel's prophecy when he is going to announce Christ to the riotous mob, but first removes the false rumour spread by some that those who were speaking in different languages experienced this delirium because of intoxication.[250] And yet he seeks their good will at once by his very address, 'men of Judaea and all who dwell in Jerusalem'; for just as ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι [men of Athens][251] pleased the Athenians' ears and *quirites*[252] the Romans' because they deemed themselves superior to other cities, so the title 'men of Judaea and all who dwell in Jerusalem'[253] won the applause of the Jews because that nation surpassed others in many respects – their divinely given law, the glory of their prophets, and their worship of the true God. His next words, 'Let this be known to you and hear my words with your ears,'[254] secure attention and credibility, since whoever begins, 'Let this be known to you and hear my words with your ears' seems to intend talking about something definite. The same effect is produced by raising the voice right at the beginning, thus demonstrating the speaker's strong conviction.

And I am not averse to the method of opening that we see used by pagan speakers as well, whereby we take our beginning from some well known anecdote that is not embarrassing to make our audience attentive by its very liveliness, so long as it is suited to the subject at hand. Cicero began

* * * * *

247 Matt 11:28
248 See Quintilian 4.1.72–9.
249 Cicero *Pro Milone* 1.1–3
250 Acts 2:14–16
251 'Men of Athens' was the standard form of address in the Athenian *ecclesia* 'popular assembly.'
252 *quirites* is an ancient, formal, and solemn term for 'Roman citizens.'
253 Acts 2:14
254 Acts 2:14

the second book of his *On Invention* in this way,[255] by relating at some length and in pleasant words an enjoyable and amusing anecdote about the painter Zeuxis, which he soon applies elegantly to his own subject matter;[256] this would be all the more appropriate to a preacher because allegory is characteristic of Scripture.[257] An example of this would be if someone condemning hypocrisy were to tell first the not unamusing story from Exodus of how Pharaoh's magicians imitated in their fakery what the Lord performed through Moses and Aaron.[258] For they too threw down their staffs, and these were turned into snakes; but Aaron's staff devoured their snakes.[259] By a similar trick they turned water into blood,[260] and unleashed frogs and serpents.[261] But though they could strike terror with the fakery of their rods, they could not dispel it, and though they could unleash blood, frogs, and other nuisances,[262] they could not destroy them; and they were at last compelled to confess that in what Aaron did there was the finger of God.[263] This story from the past shows us the nature of hypocrisy. In its external appearance, as though by fakery, it imitates true devotion. It prays profusely, dresses meanly, grows pale from fasting and sleeping upon the ground, but it does not drive away the vices of souls and does not placate an angry God, which only true devotion can do; but rather it provokes him. It is commonly said of the black arts, 'They move thunder, send afflictions and hideous diseases'; when asked to remove what they have sent, they claim to be unable. Or they deceive when they bring some pleasure, such as when they make men think that they are being refreshed with various foods in an opulent banquet, but when they return home they are tormented with hunger. The miracles of demons are either harmful or deceptions; Christ's miracles are acts of kindness. Feigned devotion both deceives those who behold it and harms those who practice it; true devotion has a firm strength, devouring the fakery of hypocrites, and fills with true joy a soul at peace

* * * * *

255 *De inventione* 2.1.1–3 begins with the story of Zeuxis of Heraclea selecting the girls of Croton for his painting of Helen.
256 *De inventione* 2.2.4. Cicero speaks here of gathering 'what seemed the most suitable precepts from each' model of eloquence he found.
257 Erasmus takes up allegory, preaching, and exegesis in book 3 passim, especially 876, 896–8, 915–72.
258 Exod 7:8–12
259 Exod 7:12
260 Exod 7:20
261 Exod 8:6; there is no mention of serpents.
262 For 'other nuisances' or gnats, see Exod 8:17.
263 Exod 8:19

with itself. It would be much the same if someone who intended to warn a person touched by some heretical teaching to shake off the poison immediately before it reaches his heart were to tell first the story from Acts of how Paul immediately shook off into the fire a viper that had crept out of the brush and seized his hand in a bite and so stayed safe by killing the beast:[264] to shake the viper off at once into the fire is to detest a heretical opinion as a present plague of the soul and to consider it worthy of hell. The books of the gospel also provide some anecdotes that are in no way unattractive if they are related properly, such as the one of how the Lord was hungry and ran to a beautifully leaved fig tree that he had seen from afar, looking for fruit upon it; when he found none, he cursed it in anger, and the apostles marvel a little later that it has withered.[265] Hunger and delay, as the comic poet says, put bile in the nose.[266] God, in keeping with his immense love towards us, hungers mightily for the fruits of justice in us, mercifully enduring the imperfect so that they might advance or the sinners until they repent. For many trees were without fruit at that time, but the Lord cursed none of them; he hates before all others those who, when seen from afar, display a marvellous appearance of holiness in their titles, practices, and feigned works, though when examined within they are not only empty of all devotion but are even like whitewashed sepulchres.[267]

Parables have the same nature as stories.[268] Some things, even if they have not happened, are related there as though they have, but they are the sort of thing that probably does occur frequently. Hence the preacher's first concern in these is selection (for one anecdote or comparison is more pleasant to tell than another), his next to bring out the significance of the subject through the appropriateness of the telling.

Moreover, a story has a more powerful effect if it is probable, that is, if it accords with nature and with custom, if it unfolds in an orderly fashion, if it is clear and presents the matter to our view like a picture,[269] if it is

* * * * *

264 Acts 28:3–6

265 Matt 21:18–20

266 The character Sosa in Plautus' *Amphitryon* gives this as 'an old saying.' See *Adagia* II viii 60 *Fames et mora bilem in nasum conciunt* 'Hunger and waiting fill the nose with bile.' See CWE 34 341 60n: '*Collectanea* no 179, citing line 81 of a spurious passage added to Plautus *Amphitryo* in the 15th century (Braun p132) which comes again in 1533 in IV x 53.'

267 Matt 23:27

268 For parables, see *De copia* CWE 24 616 and *Parabolae* CWE 23 123–277.

269 'Presents the matter to our view like a picture' represents the rhetorical devices of hypotyposis *evidentia*, or 'vivid illustration,' or ἐνάργεια described often by

realistic in characterization and conversation and debate, that is, in devising for each character his own manner of speech; for example, in the story of the man born blind[270] one sort of speech suits Christ, another the envious Pharisees, another the brave blind man, another his fearful parents. Though the sacred orator must be granted some liberty in this respect, nevertheless it is not right for him to allow himself what famous writers of histories have allowed themselves in secular affairs; these have created for themselves the general right to devise, each according to his talent, not what was said but what could have been said in the most studied manner possible.[271] They conjecture this partly from the nature of the character that they are creating or playing as speaker, partly from the circumstances of the actual case. For example, if someone were to devise a manner of speech for Phocion,[272] he should assign one that is pithy, full of maxims, serious, devout, free, and without trace of fawning, and quite different than for Demosthenes, Themistocles, or Alcibiades.[273] Likewise, whoever represents the elder Cato speaking should exhibit him free, rather captious and quarrelsome,[274] and quite different from Cicero or Caesar.

But what commends a story above all is the observation of the emotions, which the Greeks call ἤθη, that is, 'character.'[275] Since these delight

* * * * *

Quintilian; see eg Quintilian 4.2.3, 8.3.68–9, 9.2.40–1; Cicero *De oratore* 3.53.202; Erasmus book 3 807–9 below and *De copia* CWE 24 577–9 ('bring it before the eyes with all the colours filled in').

270 John 9

271 Ancient historians constructed speeches and dialogue that sought to reproduce the sense likely spoken by the historical agents. Thucydides expresses this well in *Peloponnesian War* 1.1: 'My habit has been to make the speakers say what was in my opinion demanded of them by the various occasions, of course adhering as closely as possible to the general sense of what they really said.' See also the many speeches in Livy *Ab urbe condita* (eg 2.32.8–12 the speech of Menenius); and Kennedy 23–6.

272 Phocion (c 402–318 BC), Athenian statesman and general known for his leadership, patriotism, competence, and the respect given him by his fellow Athenians. See Plutarch *Phocion*.

273 Alcibiades (c 450–404 BC), ward of Pericles, pupil of Socrates, brilliant, though unstable, Athenian general in the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BC). See especially Thucydides *Peloponnesian War* 5–8; Xenophon *Hellenica* 1; Plato *Alcibiades* and *Symposium*; and Plutarch *Alcibiades*.

274 See Plutarch *Cato the Elder*. On Cato's speeches, see Kennedy 38–60.

275 'Character' or 'ethos' or 'mores' (ἤθη) refers to the first group of emotions of the speaker or actor that are 'calm and gentle' (as opposed to the second group, the passions, which are 'violent') and whose affects are sustained delight and sympathy in the audience. See especially Quintilian's discussion of *ethos* in 6.2.8–19.

and move when expounded simply, the effect is much enhanced when they are treated artfully, since they are recognized by everyone because they are natural; of this sort are the emotions of parents towards children, children towards parents, of husbands towards wives, wives towards husbands, of old men towards youths, youths towards old men, of equals towards equals, of kin towards kin, of brothers towards brothers. And it is not enough to know and to observe these in general, since there are particular differences of character, which one can observe in comedies as though in a mirror. Simo in the *Andria*[276] was different towards his son than Menedemus in the *Heautontimorumenos*, and in the *Hecyra* Laches was one way towards his wife, Phidippus in the same play was another; and in the same work Sostrata behaves differently towards Laches than Nausistrata towards Chremes in the *Phormio*. Young lovers do indeed have something in common, yet Phaedria, Chaerea, and Pamphilus in the *Andria* and Pamphilus in the *Hecyra* love in different ways. Nor have all wives been towards their husbands like Job's wife[277] or Tobias'[278] or David's Michol.[279] The apostles shared a love of the Lord, and yet Peter was more outspoken and had a more burning faith than the others, John was more intimate and more peaceable, James and John were more earnest, Thomas slower to believe, Paul marvellous in his eloquence, Barnabas awesome in his majesty. In addition, the same manner of speech that suited the apostles when they had not yet received the Holy Spirit would not suit them after they received it, for they were no longer the same but transformed into a new creation.[280]

What I have said about the story and the parable should be felt to apply to the illustrations or natures of animals, plants, gems, or anything else. I shall not detain the reader here with a host of examples; I shall touch upon only so much as suffices for understanding the subject. Someone who plans to speak of human ingratitude will begin not inappropriately with a tale that Pliny relates,[281] not as a story but as an actual event. A certain man had a snake as a pet, but when it had grown to monstrous size he dreaded

* * * * *

276 These plays were written by the Roman playwright Terence (c 190–c 159 BC): *Andria, Heautontimorumenos, Hecyra, Phormio*.

277 See eg Job 2:9–10.

278 Tob 6:10–8:20

279 2 Sam 6:16–23

280 'New creation' (*nova creatura*); 2 Cor 5:17; see Acts 2:1–4.

281 Chomarat corrects Erasmus, noting that the story is not from Pliny but Aelian *De natura animalium* 6.63. Erasmus' recollection of the story omits some details; ASD V-4 289 932–8n. See *De copia* CWE 24 615.

his nursling and left it in the forest. Much later it happened that he was surrounded by bandits when he was going to travel through the same forest; he expected to be killed, and did the only thing he could – he shouted. The snake came running to the familiar voice of the man who had raised him, the bandits fled terrorized with fear; thus a man was rescued by the kindness of a beast. They tell a similar story from the grammarian Apion about a lion.[282] A runaway slave, hiding out of fear in a deep cave, had removed a thorn from his paw and had cleansed the wound; the animal, though savage by nature, nourished his physician there for a time by bringing the meat of game, which he used to eat after cooking it by sunlight in that extremely hot country. Finally the man, grown weary of this life, left the cavern and began to wander, but was finally captured and condemned to the beasts by his master; the wretch stood in the cage ready to present a cruel spectacle to the audience. By chance the lion whose wound he had healed had been captured; released into the cage, he first rushed at the man with terrifying force, then hesitated as if in recognition, and finally even fawned upon his physician. The slave in turn recognized his nourisher and stood calmly, while the crowd was extraordinarily astonished at the novelty of the business. The slave, asked what prodigy this was, confessed what had happened. What was done? At the crowd's insistence, his master bestowed upon the runaway not only his life but his freedom as well, and the crowd collected money so that he might have something to live on, while the slave put a soft collar around the lion's neck and led him throughout the city like a tame and domesticated dog, while everyone shouted, 'Behold the man who healed a lion; behold the lion who saved a man.'[283] An example of gratitude in a beast naturally delighted the crowd; a man's ingratitude towards his human benefactor is therefore all the more disgraceful. In an animal a small kindness overcame nature; a man who is ungrateful to one who has benefited him in many significant ways is acting contrary to nature. It is not enough that he offers no thanks for benefits received, but he repays great kindness with hatred and generosity with injury. This exordium, I think, would not be inappropriate for someone introducing a

* * * * *

282 See Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 5.14.29–30, who gives Apion as the source of this story of Androclus; see also *De copia* CWE 24 615.

283 Erasmus takes some liberties with the details of this account, and his quotation from Aulus Gellius catches the sense but not the words (Erasmus: *Ecce homo medicus leonis, ecce leo servator hominis*; Gellius: *Hic est leo hospes hominis, hic est homo medicus leonis*). It is likely that Erasmus here, as in many other places, recounts these stories from memory.

diatribe on man's inhumanity. Of course the fact that the example has been taken from a brute beast can be mitigated by saying that this is not foreign to the habit of Scripture, since Solomon sends us to the ant to learn industry from it,[284] and the Lord in the Gospel recalls his disciples to the example of the sparrows,[285] the lilies,[286] and the mustard seed.[287]

Moreover, unequal examples are more powerful, such as an example of modesty transferred from a youth to an old man, of bravery from a woman to a man, of marital devotion from pagans to Christians, finally from beasts applied to men. For instance, the fact that elephants have intercourse only in secret and kill anyone who chances to intervene is an example of modesty;[288] the fact that they raise and protect their offspring with scrupulous care until adulthood, as has been reported of dolphins as well,[289] is a reproach to the thoughtlessness of parents who provide no training or protection for their young and all but prostitute their sons and daughters. In the same way the she-ass, who runs to her offspring through the midst of fire,[290] is a reproach to the impiety of those who immediately cast their infants from them and virtually expose them by entrusting them to poorly paid nurses, who often are sickly as well and of bad character and are busy in some distant field.[291] Moreover, he will be able to win credibility if he says that this is no old wives' tale but a story written by many grave and ancient authors, which no one should find unbelievable, given that in our own daily experience we see naturally ferocious animals being tamed and reduced to obedience by human kindnesses. St Basil, when he began his eulogy of the martyr Gordius, took his exordium from the community of bees.[292]

Some err in this regard by reporting fiction as truth, like the one who pretended that Adam had been buried on Calvary right under the cross

* * * * *

284 Prov 6:6 'Go to the ant, o sluggard, and learn the ways of wisdom.'
285 Matt 10:29–31, 6:26; Luke 12:27
286 Matt 6:28–9
287 Matt 13:31; Mark 4:31
288 See Pliny *Naturalis historia* 8.5.13; Aelian *De natura animalium* 8.17; Aristotle *Historia animalium* 630b 19–31. For the importance, use, and application of bestiaries to preaching in the later Middle Ages, see Cynthia White *From the Ark to the Pulpit: An Edition and Translation of the 'Transitional' Northumberland Bestiary (13th Century)* (Louvain-la-Neuve 2009).
289 Pliny *Naturalis historia* 9.7.21
290 Pliny *Naturalis historia* 8.68.169
291 On breastfeeding, see Erasmus' discussion 541–43 below; see especially *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 410–11; *Colloquia* (*Puerpera*) CWE 39 595–6.
292 Basil *In Gordium martyrem* PG 31 489–508.

itself and that, touched by the blood of the Lord, he came alive again, summoned from the grave by Christ. To support this interpretation, he twisted these words found in Paul (though the author is uncertain): 'Arise, you who sleep, and rise up from the dead and Christ will touch you';[293] some Greek manuscripts do give this reading. Others err doubly in relating not only things that are shamelessly and ignorantly concocted but even, as they say, ἀπροσδιόνυσα [not to the point][294] and irrelevant to the theme at hand.[295]

Sometimes the situation itself provides the exordium, or it is at least taken from it. Consider, for example, the situation of Ajax in Ovid: since his case was being pleaded in a place that afforded a view of the Greek fleet, which Ajax had preserved from fire by his own courage, he took his proem from it:[296] 'By Jupiter,' he said, 'we are pleading our case / before the ships, and Ulysses is compared with me.'[297] An example of the same sort comes in Livy in book 39,[298] where the consul Postumius adapted for his exordium the formula by which those who were about to speak before the people customarily implored their gods that the business conducted should be 'prosperous and successful' and said that this entreating of the gods had never been more necessary, in order to remind them that it was these gods that their ancestors had undertaken to worship, venerate, and implore, not the ones that in corrupt foreign beliefs were driving men's minds with deadly goads to every sort of crime, etc; for he was about to expose the wicked mysteries that were being conducted in the Bacchanalia. Likewise in the same

* * * * *

293 Eph 5:14. For the pious legend that Adam lived and was buried on Calvary, see Jerome Ep 46 (Paula and Eustochium to Marcella) NPNF 2nd series 6 61: 'To bring forward something still more out of place, we must go back to yet remoter times. Tradition has it that in this city, nay, more, on this very spot, Adam lived and died . . .'

294 Literally, 'not connected with Dionysus' and so 'not to the point, mal à propos' (LSJ). See *Adagia* II iv 57.

295 See Plutarch *Moralia* 612E, *Nine Books of Table-Talk* (*Moralia, Quaestiones Convivales* 1).

296 Erasmus follows Quintilian in often using the word 'proem' in place of 'exordium'; see Quintilian 4.1.1: 'The commencement or *exordium* as we call it in Latin is styled a *proem* by the Greeks. This seems to me a more appropriate name, because whereas we merely indicate that we are beginning our task, they clearly show that this portion is designed as an introduction to the subject on which the orator has to speak.'

297 Ovid *Metamorphoses* 13.5–6 *'agimus, pro Iuppiter' inquit, 'ante rates causam, et mecum confertur Ulixes!'*

298 Livy *Ab urbe condita* 39.15

writer, in book 28,[299] when Scipio Africanus was about to punish a legion that had deserted, he stood silent for a while as if pondering, then began by saying that, though raised in camp virtually from childhood and accustomed to soldiers' ways, he uncharacteristically could not find how to begin the exordium of his speech and indeed was unsure by what name he should call his soldiers: 'I recognize the bodies, faces, dress, manner of citizens,' he said; 'I see the deeds, words, plots, anger of enemies.' The story about the sophist Leon of Byzantium is well known.[300] When he had come forward at Athens to give an address urging harmony, laughter quickly arose from the crowd because his body was noticeably obese; that clever man took his exordium from this and said, 'What are you laughing at? I have a wife much more obese than myself, and yet a single little bed holds us when we are in harmony, but out of harmony not even the entire house can hold us.' What the sophist did can seem a case of artifice and straining for effect; what Scipio did was a case of wise judgment, not artifice, or at least of the nature that he had gotten, suited to the successful conduct of the most important matters. But the heavenly Spirit supplied a similar wisdom to Paul when he was ordered to speak in Athens on the Areopagus and took his exordium from the city's statues, specifically from the altar marked, 'For the unknown god,'[301] passing gradually from this step to Christ. Chrysostom not infrequently begins in the same manner, saying first that, since he sees a crowd larger and more enthusiastic than usual in attendance, he is glad and conceives a good hope that his speech will not lack fruit, if indeed it is likely that the same Spirit that has bestowed that enthusiasm for hearing God's word will also add vigour of speech.[302] Here of course good will is being sought from praising a person, but this manner of praising is not adulation but rather encouragement to listen carefully; for instance St Paul, when ordered by King Agrippa to speak,[303] began by rejoicing that he was to speak his case before a man who knew well all the religion and rites of the Jewish people, and this preamble does not simply soothe the royal ears but shows great confidence in the accused, who feels that victory

* * * * *

299 Livy *Ab urbe condita* 28.27.1–5

300 See Philostratus *Vitae sophistarum* 485B.

301 Acts 17:16–34, especially 23

302 For this type of exordium in Chrysostom, see eg *Adversus Judaeos oratio quinta* PG 48 883 and *Homilia in laudem eorum, qui comparuerunt in ecclesia, quaeque moderatio sit servanda in divinis laudibus. Item in illud, vidi dominum sedentem in solio excelso* (*a*) (*Isai* 6.1) PG 56 97.

303 Acts 26:1–3

lies in having the judge understand the case thoroughly. But just as Chrysostom does from praising the crowd's enthusiasm, so Basil anticipates rebuke from the sudden change in his congregation's character, saying that he is rendered slow and uninspired for speaking by seeing the congregation, after so many exhortations, after the Lenten fast and vigils, even on the very evening of Easter, regressing to secular shows, to luxurious dress and drunkenness.[304] Nearer to poetic licence is how Prudentius begins his hymn on the birthday of Jesus from the increase in the days: 'Why is it that the sun, now returning, / abandons the northern circle? / Is Christ being born on earth, / Who increases the path of light?'[305] And when celebrating the martyrdom of Cassianus[306] he took his preamble from a painting he had chanced to see; when celebrating the triumph of Peter and Paul,[307] he takes his exordium from the unusually happy and crowded throng of people.

Sometimes they begin from a comparison that fits the theme. For example, someone planning to advise his congregation to sustain themselves in adversity with thoughtfulness and spiritual strength, not to grow haughty in prosperity but to restrain themselves modestly, will make a smart beginning with, 'Experienced captains, when bereft of winds and tides, turn all their sail to catch any little bit of breeze, lay on the oars and advance, so far as possible, in a diagonal course. On the other hand, when carried along by an overly favourable wind, they draw in the sail to keep the ship from being either sunk or swept onto the rocks or a whirlpool if they should lose control, for they understand that there is more danger in highly favourable weather than in adverse. It is much more fitting for us to apply this thoughtfulness, for we are sailing in this stormy world at far greater risk than those who ply Adriatic or Aegean waters,' etc. And here the field of comparing the perils of each kind of sailing and the hope if it should succeed opens up immediately; likewise if someone who plans to exhort his congregation to penitence were to take his beginning from, 'Whenever the body is either gravely wounded or is in the grip of a dangerous illness, how anxiously we summon experienced surgeons and physicians even from afar if there are none at hand, quite undeterred by the expense because the danger is mortal. But if we consider how much more fearful are the illnesses and wounds of souls than those of bodies, and how much more terrible is everlasting

* * * * *

304 Basil of Caesarea *Homilia in ebriosos 14* PG 31 (1857) 444–64
305 Prudentius *Cathemerinon* 11.1–4
306 Prudentius *Peristephanon* 9
307 Prudentius *Peristephanon* 12.1

death than the death of the flesh, is it not an act of great insanity to summon a physician there with money and entreaties, to offer one's body for burning and cutting, to swallow bitter drugs in hope of a health that is not guaranteed (and it not infrequently happens that the physicians' drugs bring death instead of the hoped for health, or at least aggravate the malady), and for a soul torn by so many deadly wounds, sick with so many fatal illnesses to seek no medicine but rather, even more unfortunately, to reject that which is offered free and without charge? It is uncertain whether a physician's brew will drive away a fever, but it is surer than sure that sins, which are the wounds and illnesses, not to say the deaths, of souls, are taken away through true penitence. To a man who promises temporary health we entrust ourselves completely, and yet towards God, who offers a medicine that promises eternal well-being, we are distrustful; for any guilty man who does not embrace penitence either distrusts God or is the enemy and betrayer of his own well-being. God proclaims "I do not want the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live."[308] We listen to a man we may not know, and to God's voice we are deaf.' Chrysostom often begins this way, as in his sermon against the Jews,[309] and he is not the only one; since there are examples everywhere, I shall not detain the reader by relating any.

Sometimes they begin from a transition, for example, 'In the last sermon you learned the duties that parents owe to their children and the appropriate way to discharge them; now hear in turn the devotion that children owe to their parents.'[310] This sort of exordium suits those who expound some volume of canonical Scripture in a series of instalments, which the Greeks call *tomi*, providing a continuous discourse, the way that Chrysostom interprets the Gospel of Matthew[311] or the Epistle to the Romans,[312] Augustine the Psalms[313] and the Gospel of John,[314] though it can occur elsewhere too; for instance, someone who the day before had interpreted the

* * * * *

308 Ezek 18:23
309 See 523 n302 above; LB VIII 7A, 30A–B, 46C–D.
310 Chrysostom *Homiliae* LB VIII 57B–C, 70B–C, 87B–C
311 Chrysostom *In Matthaeum homiliae* (*Homilies on the Gospel of Saint Matthew*) NPNF 1st series 10 (90 homilies)
312 Chrysostom *In epistulam ad Romanos homiliae* (*Homilies on the Epistle of St Paul the Apostle to the Romans*) NPNF 1st series 11 (32 homilies) 329–564
313 Augustine *Enarrationes in psalmos* (*Expositions of the Pslams*) WSA III-15–20
314 Augustine *Tractatus in Evangelium Ioannis* (*Tractates on the Gospel of Saint John*) 5 vols (Washington, DC C 1988–95)

passage of the Gospel, 'He who loves his own soul in this world will lose it; he who hates his own soul in this world will keep it,'[315] will be able to begin the next day, in order to expound the struggle of Laurence or another martyr,[316] with, 'Yesterday, dearest brothers, you heard the greatest leader and crowner of martyrs telling us what equipment the soldier who aims at victory and a heavenly crown needs to have in order to face the conflict; today you will be shown the unconquered spirit with which a noble martyr, in accordance with the Lord's command, defeated, laid low, and trod upon his enemy, a tyrant who threatened a dreadful fate and hideous tortures and a death so cruel that its very mention can strike terror in the minds of men. No wonder: Christ is unconquered, who fights in his members so that they can say with Paul, "We can do all things in him who strengthens us," '[317] etc. But there will soon be a more appropriate occasion to say more about transitions.

Of course nothing prevents the preacher from devising some striking observation so long as it suits his theme. Let the following be an example. Someone who is planning to encourage zeal for serving everyone and to condemn envy and malevolence will be able to begin as follows: 'God is by nature kind and fair, "Who makes the sun rise upon the good and the bad and rains upon the just and the unjust."[318] The devil, on the other hand, is by his nature hateful and malevolent, for he both tempts the devout to impiety and drags the wicked into hell. But all Christians are the children of God, for they proclaim every day, "Our Father, who art in heaven."[319] But if we are truly God's dearest children, let us imitate our Father, who is kindly towards the worthy and the unworthy alike, rather than that father of the wicked whom we abjured in baptism, who is eager to harm everyone not only without compensation but even to his own loss.' It will also be possible to expand this opening statement with an amplification,[320] thus: 'If the heathen celebrated in solemn assembly the memory of such as had perished bravely for the homeland, how much more does it befit us to celebrate with

* * * * *

315 John 12:25

316 St Laurence, Roman deacon and saint, was martyred on 10 August 258 under the Roman emperor Valerian; his feast day is celebrated on the anniversary of his death. See ODCC 'Laurence, St' 958. See also Jacopo da Voragine *Legenda aurea* II 63–74.

317 Cf Phil 4:13.

318 Matt 5:45

319 Matt 6:9–13

320 Erasmus addresses the rhetorical device of amplification in book 3 773–91; see Quintilian 8.4.1–29.

public rejoicing the victories of the martyrs who for Christ and his bride the church have exposed themselves to every kind of death and by their blood established the church on a solid foundation. But the memory of all the martyrs should occasion joyous celebration, and the memory of this one, who stands out among them all, should be celebrated with a more reverent joy.'

But there is no reason why the devising of a preamble, which is often more difficult than the theme itself, should wrack the preacher; it will suffice to use a brief introduction to propose the theme he is to treat. For example, someone intending to expound a psalm will be able to say at the start, 'I bring to you a treasure small in appearance, great in value, I bring to you, I say, a psalm, brief indeed if its words be counted but rich in its bounty of heavenly teaching; help me with your prayers to be able to expound it to you worthily, and implore for me the help of that Spirit that "examines all, even the depths of God."[321] It spoke its mysteries through the mouth of the prophet David; may it deign to unlock its secrets through me for your benefit.'

Sometimes the very nature of the argument somehow demands a proem,[322] for example, if the passage of Scripture that he has undertaken to expound has a story that is to all appearance absurd, like the story about Jacob, where Leah was substituted at night for Rachel,[323] and afterwards he served another seven years for his younger beloved, and about the trick in which he deceived his father-in-law with the many-coloured sticks,[324] about Rachel stealing her father's gods,[325] again about Leah using the fruits of the mandrake to purchase from her sister a night with her husband,[326] likewise about Samson's concubine,[327] about the harlot who was turned into the wife of Hosea,[328] about the Sunamite girl who warmed David with her embrace in the chill of old age,[329] and about countless others. Some of these seem foolish to the untutored and unworthy of Holy Writ, some involve vice, some are ridiculous and impossible, like the serpent talking with

* * * * *

321 1 Cor 2:10
322 'Proem' (*proemium*) is much the same as 'exordium' (*exordium*). See Quintilian 4.1.1 and n296 above.
323 Gen 29:20–8
324 Gen 30:31–43
325 Gen 31:19, 30–5
326 Gen 30:14–18
327 Ie Delilah; Judg 16:4–20
328 Hos 1:2
329 Ie Abishag; 1 Kings 1:1–4

Eve,[330] God walking to the breeze at mid-day,[331] about all the types of animals shut up in Noah's ark;[332] some possess an irritating obscurity (there are many examples of these in Ezekiel and Daniel), some are boring, such as when a passage contains a long list of Hebrew names or genealogies that go far back. It is useful to mitigate these annoyances in the exordium. Generally we will mitigate them by saying first that it is often the custom of Scripture to conceal mysteries that deserve worship beneath an unworthy covering,[333] for human and divine books have a different nature: the words of the former present a certain outstanding appearance at first sight, but if you look more closely, it often happens that a clever reader exclaims that he has found coals instead of treasure;[334] those of the latter, on the other hand, conceal divine wisdom beneath a contemptible appearance, so that the more deeply you delve, the more and more you are astonished, if only someone brings his spiritual eyes with him to spiritual Scripture. And this did not happen by accident: it suited divine wisdom to conceal its mysteries,[335] which would only be laughed at, and to give the devout access to the hidden meaning; thus the Son of God himself came into the world dissembling his divine nature for the wicked under the disguise of a human body, and he spoke to the people through parables whose mystical meaning he was not reluctant to expound separately to the apostles.[336] Sometimes that divine Spirit combines things that are ridiculous and do not cohere literally, in order to drive our intellect from the literal sense and compel it to seek something more recondite in those words; but if we do not consider it a nuisance to dig through mountains searching for gold and silver in the crumbling earth, much less should it bother us to endure a little tedium on the surface of the letter in order to reach treasures far more precious than gold and silver. And one should not be bored by hearing Hebrew names, even without understanding them, since in the canonical texts not even a point has been placed by chance; rather, just as we venerate the containers of holy relics without knowing what is inside so long as we believe that the object

* * * * *

330 Gen 3:1–5
331 Gen 3:8
332 Gen 7:1–3, 8–9, 14–16
333 Erasmus speaks here of the exegetical principles he will develop later in book 3, where the preacher learns to read the spiritual sense of Scripture through its often difficult and obscure exterior literal wording. See book 3 passim.
334 *Adagia* I ix 30 *Thesaurus carbones erant* 'The treasure consisted of coals'
335 Cf 1 Cor 1:18–31.
336 See Matt 13:36–51, 15:15–20; Luke 12:41–8.

concealed is holy,[337] so it is appropriate to hear or to recite those names with reverence even though we cannot explain with certainty the mysteries of them all. Nor will that reverence lack fruit of its own, for if wicked spirits heed magicians' words, which they do not themselves understand and perform marvellous things, how much more should we believe that good spirits will attend words of this sort when pronounced with faith and will win some good from God through them. We must strive to perceive the mysteries of Scripture as far as human weakness is capable; nevertheless, those who pronounce the words of Scripture with religious veneration, even those that they do not yet fully understand, do not lack their own reward.

He will be able to dispel the boredom caused by obscurity or complexity if, in his preface, he asks that they take the trouble to hear with attentive ears what the Holy Spirit has so carefully provided for our sake; at the same time, let him promise that he will shorten the subject so that it can be understood quickly and easily, and that joyous fair weather will follow once the clouds have been dispelled.

Anything that looks like vice though not really connected with vice needs to be excused, for example, the fact that Abraham was ready to sacrifice his son,[338] and that the Hebrews fled after despoiling the Egyptians,[339] inasmuch as God's will is the surest yardstick of the just and unjust: whatever God forbids to be done is wicked by the very fact that God forbade it, and whatever he commands is right by the very fact that God commanded it. Besides, nothing prevents some mystery lurking in these things that are associated with vice. The fact that David had Uriah killed and married Bathsheba, by whom he fathered Solomon,[340] does not provide an example for our imitation, because it was done contrary to law without God's command; yet underneath there is a mystery worthy of our respect, just as the Lord himself draws a parable from the humble deeds of men in order to promote zeal for piety, for example, when he applies the scheming of the disloyal steward to zeal for serving everyone,[341] and Paul draws an exhortation to exercising devotion with all one's heart from the example of those who fight in the arena.[342]

* * * * *

337 Cf Lateran IV, Canon 62: 'Ancient relics shall not be displayed outside a reliquary or be put up for sale'; Tanner I 263.
338 Gen 22:1–15
339 Exod 3:21–2, 12:35–6
340 2 Sam 11–12:1–25
341 Luke 16:1–10
342 2 Timothy 2; 1 Cor 9:16–27

In matters that seem impossible, the preacher may begin as follows: that there are countless things in nature that no one would credit if the experience of his senses did not make him believe them, like the magnet that attracts iron at one end and repels at the other, and so it would be foolish to inquire whether the things that the Lord of nature creates are possible. Sometimes there are also human reasons why something that seemed impossible at first sight looks as though it *could* happen, like what we read about Noah's ark, which Apelles[343] claimed to be an invented story on the grounds that, according to the description of the whole ark represented in Genesis,[344] the part assigned to the animals could scarcely have held three elephants, especially when Noah was ordered to take on 'two of each and two of each' of the unclean (that is two pairs), 'seven of each and seven of each' of the clean (that is, fourteen pairs), and to lay up a year's food for all of them;[345] but this will seem less ridiculous if we teach that the cubit understood there is not the common one but the geometric.[346] Moreover, the Egyptians were especially skilled in geometry, and Scripture bears witness that Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.[347] As Origen reports, scholars of Hebrew antiquities relate that, according to the geometric ratio that the Egyptians call the 'power,' from a square and a cube one cubit is reduced either into six, if you take it as a whole, or into three hundred, if

* * * * *

343 Apelles (d c 200): pupil of the Gnostic Marcion, founder of a Gnostic sect, and author of the *Syllogisms* (Συλλογισμοί), he modified Marcion's dualism and teaching on Christ, holding instead to one divine principle but composed writings against the Old Testament. See Eusebius *Historia ecclesiastica* (*Ecclesiastical History*) 5:13 NPNF 2nd series 1 227–9, where he speaks of Apelles and dissent among the Marcionites. Our knowledge of Marcion comes through comments by Tertullian *De praescriptione haereticorum* (*The Prescription against Heretics*) 6, 30, 33 ANF III 243–65; Pseudo-Tertullian *Adversus omnes haereses* (*Against All Heresies*) ibidem 653; Hippolytus Romanus *Refutatio omnium haeresium* (*The Refutation of All Heresies*) 10.16 ANF V 147; Origen *On Genesis* 2.2 in *Homilies on Genesis and Exodus* (*In Genesim homiliae XVI* and *In Exodum homiliae XIII*) (Washington, DC c 1982); and Ambrose *De paradiso* 5.28 in *Exameron, De paradiso, De Cain et Abel* (*Hexameron, Paradise, and Cain and Abel*) FOC 42. See too Ep 17:168–74 to Bernard of Cles, 27 August 1526; CWE 12 299–300 nn50–1.

344 Gen 6:15–16

345 Gen 6:21. Genesis does not mention that Noah is 'to lay up a year's food for all of them.'

346 Chomarat notes that Origen says he learned from a wise Jew how mathematically to understand these dimensions. See *On Genesis* 2.2 in *Homilies on Genesis and Exodus* (*In Genesim homiliae XVI*, *In Exodum homiliae XIII*) (Washington, DC c 1982); ASD 299 204n and 208–9n.

347 Acts 7:22

you reduce it piece by piece. By this calculation the space could hold all the types. In addition, 'two of each and two of each,' 'seven of each and seven of each,' according to this Hebrew idiom, indicate distribution rather than duplication of the number, that is, one pair from each type of the unclean, seven pairs of the clean; for example, when Mark chapter 6 writes that δύο δύο [two, two] apostles were sent,[348] you do not understand that they were sent as four but by pairs. Add to this the fact that the only animals taken were those that propagate, when fully developed, by intercourse, that in fact the species of animals were fewer at that time and grew afterwards by interbreeding, and finally that the measure of the cubit was larger because men were larger then, for Pythagoras too determined the measure of Hercules' body by comparing the stadium measured out by Hercules' feet at Pisa to other stadia of Greece with an equal number of feet but a shorter span.[349]

Related to these is the sort of beginning in which we adapt the proem to the nature of the theme. For example, if the subject on which we are going to speak is a happy one, such as the triumph of the risen Christ, the celebration of a feast of the most Blessed Virgin, the exordium will properly be taken from sentiments of the following sort: 'Just as commanders sometimes grant to their soldiers certain holidays and sports for relaxing their spirits, especially after meritorious conduct, in order for them to bear more easily the labours of camp, so God deigns frequently to cheer his soldiers on festive days, tempering the sad with the joyous so that they can endure. But there ought to be the greatest difference between the joy of those who soldier for the world and those who soldier for Christ. The joy of the former, because it consists of debauchery and drunkenness, frequently turns into brawls and fistfights, and even if none of these occurs, it often happens that the merrymaking of a single day brings many days' torment by contracting a fever or a headache from the hangover. The feasts of Christians have a sober and modest joy, for the celebrating is done with spiritual rejoicing, and the dances are led not to the pipes of the flute-player but to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; they sing to the Lord in their hearts with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.[350] This then is the true merrymaking worthy of Christians, which gladdens consciences even for many days and renders them more eager, not for physicians but for undertaking the duties

* * * * *

348 Mark 6:7; see *Paraphrasis in Marcum* CWE 49 76–7.

349 Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 1.1. The author begins by referring to Plutarch's work *Life of Hercules* (as it was probably called). Pisa was 'a district in Elis round Olympia' OLD.

350 Eph 5:19; Col 3:16

of devotion. Of course the prophet senses this when he says, "This day that the Lord has made, let us exult and rejoice in it,"[351] and, as the Holy Church sings, "Let us all be glad in the Lord."[352] For it is appropriate that we exult and feast on the day that the Lord made, but in the Lord; and it is not fitting that we should make a day of Satan out of the day that the Lord made.'

Again, if the subject involves something painful to human inclinations, such as an exhortation to penitence or a correction of vices, he will be able to begin from expressions of this sort: 'We should hope and strive that no one be in need of physicians' drugs, but when disease attacks, we should be grateful for remedies that, though not agreeable, are nonetheless beneficial. Blessed are they who have done nothing of which they need repent, but those who bear a conscience seething with deadly diseases should embrace so mild, so effective a remedy for penance with great eagerness; even if it sometimes saddens a person, this sadness does not bring death, as does the sadness of the world,[353] but creates stable health.' Or thus: 'Those who suffer from boils or abscesses willingly call in and pay a surgeon to apply biting plasters or, if the situation demands, employ fire and iron; how perverse-minded then are those who are offended if someone touches the sores of their consciences with the aim of healing rather than of harming. You bear the physician's cuts with a tolerant spirit, and you cannot bear Scripture accusing your vices or a friendly pastor trying without charge to heal your mind's wounds. If the pain is frightening, a mind with a guilty conscience brings an everlasting and much more bitter pain than a correction that comports some brief unpleasantness but brings everlasting peace of mind. I shall speak against vices, not against persons. Let those who have a clear conscience thank God; those who are guilty will not be betrayed by my speech. Let them only know themselves and together with the others give thanks to God after correction, the former for the preservation of their innocence, the latter for its restoration. Each is by divine gift, hence those who feel themselves immune from the sins that are being attacked should not feel proud: perhaps they would have done worse if they had

* * * * *

351 Ps 118:24 (Vulg 117:24). This verse is recited at the liturgy on Easter; the response is the second part of the same verse, *Exultemus et laetemur in ea* [*Alleluia*].

352 'Let us all be glad in the Lord' (*Gaudeamus omnes in Domino*). This nonpsalmodic proper appears in the Introit on the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin (15 August), All Saints (1 November), and on other feast days of the Blessed Virgin.

353 Cf 2 Cor 7:8–12.

not been saved by divine mercy. It is the Pharisees who say, "I am not like other men" and "like this publican."[354] The penitent sinner is dearer to the Lord than the self-satisfied just man, and it often happens that the man who sees a speck in his neighbour's eye is carrying around a beam in his own.[355] Someone may not be a slave to the vice of drunkenness, but he is drunk from some baser emotion such as hate, envy, greed; but since we are all members of a single body,[356] it is fair that both grief and gladness be shared by all. Let those who are standing see that they do not fall, and let them pray for the fallen to the Lord, who is so far from being unapproachable by prayer that he even invites us to come to our senses, showing that forgiveness is at hand: "Turn to me," he says, "and I will turn to you."'[357] But this instruction has a wider application and pertains to every kind of exordium.

I shall end my discussion of the exordium by adding that a statement of the proposed theme with its various headings can be used in place of a proem; for example, 'I have decided today to explain to you, with God's help, three things especially necessary for you to know: how agreeable to God and how effective a thing is charity; then how far the word charity applies; finally the temperance with which charity is to be distributed.' And I think that enough has been said so far about the proem so that the wise preacher is given the opportunity of devising examples like these or even better.

But before we come to the other parts of the speech, we see that many have adopted the habit of appending an invocation of the deity to the exordium.[358] This custom seems to have been taken from the poets, who, after announcing their theme, regularly add an invocation of a deity,[359] especially one who presides over the subject they propose to write about; for example Virgil, at the beginning of his book on agriculture, after announcing the themes of the four books, invokes all the gods who were believed to be concerned with grain or the vine or the olive and other trees or cattle and

* * * * *

354 Luke 18:11
355 Cf Matt 7:3 and Luke 6:41.
356 Cf Eph 3:6, 4:25; Col 3:15.
357 Zec 1:3
358 See Quintilian 4. Pr. 4–6.
359 See Quintilian 4. Pr. 4: 'But no one is surprised at the frequency with which the greatest poets invoke the Muses not merely at the commencement of their works, but even further on when they have reached some important passage and repeat their vows and utter fresh prayers for assistance.'

horses.[360] He also began the *Aeneid* in this way,[361] and Ovid his *Metamorphoses*,[362] albeit in fewer words, while Homer starts each work with an invocation, combining with it a statement of the theme: 'Reveal to me, goddess, the anger of Peleus' son'[363] and 'Tell me, Muse, the man.'[364] Statius imitated this: 'Of the noble descendant of Aeacus and offspring / Feared by the Thunderer and forbidden to succeed / To his father's heaven, Goddess, speak,'[365] though he makes it more obscure in accordance with the nature of that age, when the pursuit of declamation had already spoiled the original simplicity, just as Lucan also aims at the cleverness of a declaimer right in his very exordium.[366] Prudentius in his Ψυχομαχία [*Psychomachia*][367] imitated Homer: 'Christ, who have always pitied grievous human toils. / ... Say, our King, with what troops the mind can arm itself / To drive the faults from the cavern of our heart,'[368] likewise when describing the martyrdom of St Vincent: 'O glorious martyr, / Bless your own triumphal day.'[369]

Either method of beginning will suit our preacher, whether he introduces the invocation after proposing the theme or combines the proposition with the invocation. An example of the former will be, 'The Psalm that I am going to expound today to you, my dear friends, is full of the hidden mysteries of divine wisdom; let us join our prayers and invoke the Spirit of Christ to deign to suggest to us words that are both worthy of him and salutary to you.' This will be an example of the latter: 'Before all, most beloved, let us implore the aid of the divine Spirit, so that what once enabled the apostles to speak with fiery tongues may deign to attend us as we are about to speak of love, and may inflame my tongue and your minds and mine alike with the fire of love.'[370] But what better place from which to begin the praise of love than from the words of the disciple whom the Lord Jesus embraced with a singular love;[371] for he says, 'God is love, and he who

* * * * *

360 Virgil *Georgics* 1.5–23
361 Virgil *Aeneid* 1.8–11
362 Ovid *Metamorphoses* 1.2–4
363 Homer *Iliad* 1.1
364 Homer *Odyssey* 1.1
365 Statius *Achilleid* 1.1–3
366 Lucan *Bellum civile* 1.1–7
367 Literally 'Soul-Battle' (Translator's note)
368 *Psychomachia* 1 and 5–6
369 *Peristephanon* 5:1–2
370 Cf Acts 2:3–4; and the hymn from the liturgy of Pentecost, *Veni, Sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum corda fidelium, et tui amoris in eis ignem accende.*
371 See John 13:23.

abides in love abides in God,'[372] etc. It is useful, however, to add an invocation whenever it seems to be beneficial, as when a passage comes up that is rather difficult to explain. 'Let us knock on his ears, so that the one who says, "Knock and it will be opened to you"[373] may open the mystery of this Scripture to us,' for besides conforming to Christian piety, it is also useful as a way of renewing the hearer's attention; for it is stirred as though to some uncommon matter worth knowing. Furthermore, it is appropriate that both proposition and invocation be brief and clear.

But it is strange how the currently widespread custom came to be established of hailing the most blessed Mother of God after the exordium has been spoken, and doing it with greater reverence than that with which they invoke Christ or his Spirit, calling her the fount of all grace.[374] Of course, I think that nothing that is done with a devout and pure mind should be criticized too harshly, but those who urge this custom too vigorously should remember that, first of all, it is contrary to the authority of Scripture, for James instructs the man who lacks wisdom to seek it not from the saints but from God;[375] then, that it is contrary to the example of all the ancients, whom one should imitate in preference to those nonentities who, perhaps to flatter the female sex, have wrongly imitated the heathen poets and substituted the Virgin Mother for the Muse. This practice is even more foolish

* * * * *

372 1 John 4:16

373 Matt 7:7; Luke 11:9

374 Erasmus notes the custom among preachers of his day often to say the 'Hail Mary' [*Ave Maria*] 'after the exordium has been spoken.' On the reason preachers adopt a prayer after the theme or the protheme, see Gilson 'Menot' 102: 'C'est qu'en effet l'oeuvre du salut des âmes, fin propre du sermon, ne peut s'accomplir sans la grâce de Dieu qui seule les sauve; la très ancienne coutume de prier au commencement de la prédication n'a pas d'autre fondement, et c'est ce qu'un orateur conscient de la modestie de son rôle rappelle d'abord à soi-même et à ses auditeur: le prédicateur parle, mais c'est Dieu qui convertit.' See also Chomarat *Grammaire* II 1071–7. See also CWE 84 250–1 nn862–8 for further references to Erasmus and this custom. See also Erasmus' brief comment on the cult of Mary in *Moria* CWE 27 120. For ideas of Mary in the Middle Ages, see especially *Legenda aurea* I 143–51 (The Purification of the Virgin), I 196–203 (The Annunciation of the Lord), II 77–97 (The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary), II 149–58 (The Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary). See also Luigi Gambero *Mary in the Middle Ages: The Blessed Virgin Mary in the Thought of the Latin Theologians* trans Thomas Buffer (San Francisco 2005); and Herbert Thurston 'Hail Mary' *Catholic Encyclopedia* VII (New York 1910) 110–12; John Hennig 'Ave Maria' *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* ed Joseph R. Strayer 12 vols (New York 1983) 2 13–14.

375 James 1:5

when the theme does not fit the character of a virgin, for example, if someone were to expound the types of lust or the various means of losing one's virginity. It is more suitable that Prudentius, to celebrate Vincent, does not invoke him as though he were God but only prays that he bless his own triumphal day; so it would be more acceptable if he were to implore the Virgin's aid to speak the Virgin's praises. Add to all this the fact that, after telling the congregation to invoke the Blessed Virgin, they ask nothing of her but merely greet her in the words of the angel[376] and of Elizabeth.[377] Even if someone were to begin by calling for God to be invoked, then asked nothing of him but to praise him with the angel's song, 'Glory to God in the highest,'[378] while this would not be without its folly, it is much more foolish to offer a greeting to the Blessed Virgin in place of a prayer. It is devout indeed to praise God, but everything has its place, and whatever does not occur in its time appears foolish.[379] They are angry that a praiseworthy custom is being uprooted, but others are more justly angry that a more praiseworthy one is being abolished. In one of his sermons Jean Gerson, a devout man, raises in the very invocation the question of whether the Virgin Mother felt nascent impulses towards vices.[380] I know that some have found a line of argument by which the Virgin Mother can be called the fount of all graces because she bore Christ, the fount of all grace. Here I suppose they will croak Aristotle's phrase, 'That which causes anything to be such as it is is also that thing all the more':[381] let us then call Aristotle's

* * * * *

376 Luke 1:28 ('Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.' DV)

377 Luke 1:42 ('Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb!' DV)

378 See Luke 2:14. These are also the words that begin the *Gloria* in the liturgy.

379 Erasmus repeats another fundamental principle for preachers, that words must be fitting to the subject, occasion, and the persons addressed. See book 3 passim where he discusses 'speaking appropriately' (*apte dicere*). See Quintilian 11.1.1 (*ut dicamus apte*) and 11 passim; and 3.8.15: 'Consequently there are three points which must be specially borne in mind in advice or dissuasion: first the nature of the subject under discussion, secondly the nature of those who are engaged in the discussion, and thirdly the nature of the speaker who offers them advice.'

380 It is difficult to identify the sermon Erasmus is referring to here; perhaps it is *Sermo* 232 in Jean Gerson *Oeuvres complètes* ed P. Glorieux 5 (Paris 1963) 344–62, *In festo nativitatis B. Mariae Virginis*, where Gerson takes up the consideration 'of the repression of concupiscence in both' Mary and Joseph (*agetur in tertia de fomitis repressione in utroque*), 345; see also 350–6.

381 *propter quod quicque tale, et illud magis*; see Aristotle *Posterior Analytics* 1.2.72a, 29 and *Metaphysics* Θ 8, 1049 b 24–5: 'the cause of an attribute's inherence in a

father the greatest philosopher, since he sired the greatest philosopher. And yet this label, 'fount of all grace,' does not apply even to Christ according to the human nature that he assumed from the Virgin. But why is it necessary to introduce, contrary to scriptural authority, contrary to the example of the Fathers of the church, a practice that requires an excuse? It would be more appropriate if someone who was going to expound an epistle of Paul were to appeal to Paul to grant to his words the spirit in which Paul himself wrote; and yet that custom has not been adopted by the church. Finally, it is not necessary always to have an invocation, especially when the sermon itself takes its start right from an attack on vices;[382] in a sacred assembly the invocation is always silent.[383]

There remains the narration,[384] concerning which I think I have given sufficient advice for the preacher.

We shall give some advice concerning division, a word that can be taken two ways.[385] First, to show us only a single part of a speech that has a twofold function; for not only does it show the hearer where he should direct his attention, but it also sets forth the topics to be discussed, their precise number, and sequence. Take this for example: 'To speak about Christian

* * * * *

subject always itself inheres in the subject more firmly than that attribute; eg the cause of our loving anything is dearer to us than the object of our love.'

382 Erasmus often mentions that sermons 'attack vice'; and this is clearly his understanding about what preaching should be largely concerned with. See especially book 4.

383 Erasmus' concluding words likely refer to the convention of not including vocal invocations in sermons delivered during the liturgy itself (*inter missarum solemnia*); outside these times, however, they were appropriate.

384 In Quintilian (book 4) the 'narration' (*narratio*) follows the exordium and is occupied principally with teaching (4.2.24), as Erasmus explains 492 n122 and 500 above. It is that part of the speech in which the orator sets out the facts of the case. The word does not fit a sermon very comfortably, but Erasmus will accommodate the idea to the main argument and parts of the sermon. Here, however, Erasmus states that he has already covered this fully, which is not altogether accurate; he likely passes over this because Quintilian treats this part of the speech as belonging to forensic oratory. Quintilian also states that the matter is 'somewhat long and complicated' (4.1.79). For narration, see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.8.12–1.9.16 and Lausberg §§289–347. Erasmus touches on this often in books 2 and 3.

385 For 'division' (*divisio*) and 'partition' (*partitio*), see Quintilian 4.5.1–28 and 5.10.63; Cicero *De inventione* 1.22.31–1.23.33; and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.10.17 (where the word *enumeratio* is used). In each work the idea is briefly to make known to the audience the outline of what one plans to say. Quintilian says it is 'the enumeration in order of our own *propositions*, those of our adversary or both' (4.5.1). See especially Lausberg §347.

marriage, I shall expound as briefly as I can three things that must be known. In the first place, I shall instruct you in the methods and rites by which a legitimate marriage is to be entered and for how many reasons it must be sundered if it has been contracted wrongly; in the second place, how binding a thing marriage is and how venerable a sacrament in Christ and the church; in the third place, how abominable a sin is adultery.' But the word division has a broader application whenever it is used instead of arrangement or order; this is scattered throughout all parts of the address. We shall deal with the former now, with the latter in its place.

To set out the parts of a sermon at the beginning, though it has great value, is not, however, without its problems. It is very helpful to the listeners' memory and their ability to learn, and it helps the speaker in so far as it has definite stages to which he can return from digressions. But it can hinder, to the extent that sometimes things come to mind in speaking that it is not appropriate to pass over but that do not fit any of the promised sections; thus it happens that they must be left out, to the detriment of the argument, or must be shoved quite inelegantly and roughly into some passage or other, not to mention that some have such an unfortunate memory that, as Cicero says (about Curio, if I am not mistaken), when they have promised three parts, they either leave out one of the three from forgetfulness or else add a fourth.[386] Hence it is safer for those who mistrust their memory to propose only the gist of their theme, or at least to have the headings of their sermon at hand, written out on paper. Augustine seems to have done this for some psalms, and perhaps even for all of them, for he has frequent and remote digressions, often speaking extemporaneously, though the man had a fabulously retentive memory.[387] Of course, someone who is going to speak must prepare an order, but it is not, therefore, necessary for him to set forth what he has conceived in his mind; a thought can easily be corrected, a proposal once stated is not so free. And thus to affect some subtlety in division when the material does not inherently offer an opportunity for a partition and has no adjunct cause

* * * * *

386 Gaius Scribonius Curio (c 125–53), an opponent of Cicero, compared in *Brutus* (66.234) to Gnaeus Lentulus: 'by some wealth of diction and without any other good quality held the rank of orator . . .' On his bad memory, see *Brutus* 58.210–61.220, especially 59.217; and *Orator* 37.129. On the unseemliness of adding items that have not been mentioned in the partition, see Cicero *De inventione* 1.22.32.

387 Thirty-one sermons on psalms survive in the *Opera* of St Augustine; see WSA III-1 331–7 and III-2 15–136, 154–65. Erasmus possibly has in mind Augustine's *Enarrationes in psalmos*; see CCSL 38, 39, 40; WSA III-15–20.

that requires dividing not only torments a preacher with unnecessary work but even lessens the speaker's credibility and the sermon's charm, since we more willingly believe those whose heart, rather than training, supplies the flow of speech, and things that are commended by their novelty for having just been created are more pleasing than what is promised and expected.[388] But if a somewhat obscure or difficult theme is to be treated, a suitable and proper partition will shed much light there and will considerably assist the hearer's disposition towards learning, namely by plucking the main points of the subjects out of the mob, as it were, and laying them before his view. Likewise, if the nature of the material has distinct parts, and if there is no reason why a partition should be avoided, one should be wary of a minutely detailed division that carves a subject into finger-lengths and pieces rather than into limbs, since a multitude of parts should always be avoided as far as possible, as it spreads a fog even over a case that is not naturally obscure; it impedes the audience's memory and disposition to learn, while a partition that introduces or increases the very inconvenience that it is being applied to remove or reduce is ridiculous. The divisions of Nicolaus of Lyra are generally like this,[389] as are those of Thomas in expounding canonical Scripture[390] and of Jean Gerson in his compositions;[391] in their pursuit of subtlety, they sometimes carve into many pieces things that are a unity or at least so coherent that they are difficult to separate. Many scholastics maintain this custom: they propose a mass of propositions; after clarifying these they draw out conclusions; finally, with the subject more

* * * * *

388 Quintilian makes the same observation, noting that 'there are many many points which can be produced in a more attractive manner, if they appear to be discovered on the spot and not to have been brought ready made from our study ... Thus we get those not unpleasing figures such as "It has almost escaped me," "I had forgotten," or "You do well to remind me" ...' (4.5.4).

389 Nicholas of Lyra (c 1270–1349), Franciscan exegete, regent master at the Sorbonne, author of *Postillae litterales super totam Bibliam* (1322–33) and *Postillae morales* (1339), comments on biblical chapters and verses, investigating the literal and moral senses of Scripture in light of patristic and later theological scriptural commentaries. Lyra's works were commonly adapted by preachers for Sunday sermons. For Erasmus' acquaintance with Lyra's works, see Jane E. Phillips 'Translator's Note' CWE 46 xiv. See the essays on Lyra's biblical scholarship in Philip D.W. Krey and Lesley Smith *Nicholas of Lyra: The Senses of Scripture* (Leiden 2000).

390 For Erasmus' criticisms of Thomas Aquinas' exegetical work, see Jane E. Phillips ibidem and LB VI 1020F. Chomarat notes Erasmus faulting Thomas for not knowing Greek ASD V-4 307 409n.

391 On Jean Gerson, see Erasmus' comments 495 above.

obscured than explained, they make their pronouncements. This sort of dividing, though it be conceded to the schools on account of the subtlety of the subject, certainly does not suit the pulpit, where such verbal tricks are either not to be treated or, if there is some reason why they must be touched upon, one must strive to avoid all display of subtlety and to have the matter itself propounded to the congregation as clearly and unambiguously as possible.[392]

But in order to divide correctly, you must distinguish which are the principal props of the argument as a whole. These should be set out in the division, no more than three according to some;[393] but this should not be observed if the argument has been demarcated by several sections or if the one to whom we are replying has proposed specific sections. That can be observed so long as one sets out the fewest possible. But if some of the parts are quite minute, it is not necessary to set them out in the division; it will be sufficient to add them to the general ones through subdivision in the course of treating them. For example, to speak a eulogy of any saint, he will be able to partition thus: 'I shall expound to you his attitude to God, to himself, to his neighbour.' The first part has many subordinate parts; for example, devotion towards God is distinguished by various duties, just as the governing of one's own body and moderation of the appetites can be divided into many parts. The word 'neighbour' already embraces parents, wife, children, teachers, kin, citizens, friends, and enemies, and each of these parts has many subdivisions. Similarly, if someone who wanted to encourage fasting were to mention explicitly in his division all the benefits that arise from fasting, he will produce confusion rather than parts, for they are countless. It will be enough to make a general proposition, as follows: 'I shall show that fasting, which the mass of men dread as something harmful and grim, should be embraced for many reasons. First, nothing is better than godliness; the soul finds fasting useful for this. Some assign good health first place among possessions, and fasting assists this most marvellously. Finally, a good part of mankind deems it a great part of happiness to possess wealth, and it dreads poverty. Sobriety also assists the faculties that debauchery diminishes.' But in the treatment you must distinguish all the ways in which fasting is conducive to devotion: by thinning the body it renders

* * * * *

392 Erasmus again emphasizes the fundamental distinction between a lecture on scholastic theology and preaching.

393 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.10.17: 'The number [*enumeratio*] ought not to exceed three . . .' Erasmus does not accept this view, but follows Quintilian (4.5.3–28), as he goes on to explain.

the mind more suitable for sacred doctrine and for praying and for contemplating the celestial; it increases devotion in the devout, reconciles penitents to God. Likewise, it produces manifold benefits for bodies, either because it preserves from the countless diseases that debauchery spawns or because it either cures or alleviates diseases that are already attacking, often more effectively than physicians' drugs – for all the most experienced physicians, especially in Italy, prescribe nothing more frequently than fasting (they consider this more useful than what the Germans do, who are quick either to cut a vein or to prescribe hot baths). Moreover, it renders more delightful those very pleasures that people seek, for after fasting sleep is sweeter and relaxation more pleasant and intercourse with one's wife more agreeable and even more fertile, since drunkenness not only destroys the sensation of that pleasure but also makes bodies less suitable for procreation; in fact even a chat with friends is sweeter when fasting than when burdened with a hangover. Finally, since pleasure is perceived through the five external senses, each sense brings the more delight the more suited it is to its function: the eyes see more clearly, the ears hear more sharply, the tongue stumbles less and distinguishes flavours better, the sense of smell is keener in the nostrils, in all the limbs the faculty of touch is more precise.

And so it would be a foolish division if someone who wanted to deliver an encomium of St Francis were to set out all the headings of his argument, 'I shall show in Francis sixty virtues in which he surpassed the other saints,' and were to recount them explicitly in the division, when it is enough to promise that he will show that that saint is to be compared or even preferred to the primary saints in many great virtues. Or, if he wants to urge a mother not to give her infant to another for nursing but to nourish with her own breasts what she bore, he will not promise all the forms of the propositions: 'First, I shall show that to drive an infant from its mother's breasts is contrary to nature, which has given every animal nourishment with which to raise its young. Second, I shall show that it is contrary to the teaching of divine Scripture and the examples of the devout. Third, I shall demonstrate that those who refuse to nourish their offspring are not even worthy of the name of mother or, if they are mothers, they are scarcely half mothers. Fourth, I shall say that it is ridiculous for a woman who nourished something in her womb not to want to nourish something that is now a human being and crying for its mother's help. Fifth, I shall teach that banishing a newborn infant from oneself is not much less wicked than expelling an unborn one with drugs through abortion. Sixth, I shall show that not wanting to raise what you bore is a kind of exposing; the exposed often survive, but many infants die by the fault of their hired nursemaids. Seventh, I shall show that the vigour and flame of native devotion, which is the greatest virtue, is in large

part extinguished between parents and children through this banishing of infants and is transferred to the nursemaids. Eighth, I shall say that unfamiliar milk often harms infants' bodies if the woman hired is in poor health or has tainted milk or if she delivers the flowing milk more sparingly than needed because she is using her breasts to nourish several infants. Ninth, I am going to prove that it is unlikely that some woman who is hired for money will take the same care of another's infant as its true mother, whom natural affection stirs to her duty so that she not only feels no annoyance but is even delighted to accomplish all the things that seem bothersome to those who are not related. Tenth, I shall teach you that, even without any of the above, it is still impossible for someone else's milk to help an infant's little body as much as its mother's, for even as adults we are nourished better by what is akin and familiar: but the infant has become accustomed to his mother's fluid already in the uterus, since the liquid by which it is nourished in the womb and the one that it draws from its mother's nipples is the same, except that the latter is more digested and therefore more refined. Eleventh, I shall teach you that hired nursemaids harm not only the tiny bodies of infants but their minds and characters as well, especially when one cannot make a free choice, since neither do all women have milk nor do all want to hire out their services, and so it happens that one must often employ a woman who is forward, a drinker, or shameless: the infant drinks up the quality of these vices right with the milk itself. Twelfth, I will teach you that this is how the reverence and obedience of already growing children towards their parents comes to decrease, for they scarcely recognize as their mothers those by whose milk they were not nourished. In thirteenth place, I shall instruct you that childbearing women consign their children to others for feeding at the risk of their own safety, because the retention and diversion of that liquid not infrequently produces serious ailments; and so it happens that a woman who feared that her breasts would start to sag if she fed her children puts her own life at risk, and disease ages her far more than the effort of feeding would have.'[394] This partition is faulty in two ways,

* * * * *

394 For Erasmus' sources on the benefits of breastfeeding, see Chomarat ASD V-4 309 465–6n. Except for Plato (*Republic* 5.460C), ancient writers advocated the practice of mothers feeding their own babies rather than allowing other lactating women to do so; see Pseudo-Plutarch *Moralia* 3C–F (*De liberis educandis*). Quintilian insists only that 'the child's nurse (*nutrix*) speak correctly' (1.1.4). See also Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 12.1.4–23; and Erasmus *Colloquia* (*Puerpera*) CWE 39 590–618, especially 591–2 for citations on Erasmus' thoughts on breastfeeding, and *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 315.

both because it is wordy and because it carves the theme as a whole not into members but into pieces. Of course the speaker must have all of this planned and arranged, but it is uninspired to set out every single one in the division; but if one wanted to use a partition, it would be enough to say, 'I shall instruct you that the practice of mothers hiring out their children for feeding is in conflict with natural and divine law; furthermore, that it is useless for both the health and character of the children; finally, that it is not safe even for the mother.' All the rest could be reduced to these three propositions.

Of course, when a theme inherently possesses numerous parts, it will be better to set them out in summary form than to enumerate each one, in the partition at any rate. For instance, since heretics have formed a variety of mad fantasies concerning the person of Christ, it is not appropriate to enumerate the errors of each in the division; it will be enough to present the proposition this way: 'In order for us to have a firmer grasp of Catholic truth, I shall briefly expound the varied errors that have led heretics astray from it.' The Apostles' Creed was divided into many sections,[395] of which a partition should embrace only the general ones, such as these: the first article pertains to God the Father, several to God the Son, one to the Holy Spirit, the last ones to Christ's mystical body, the church. The particular ones that are included in these four general ones should not be set out in a division but rather inserted in their place. But if excessively frequent partitions are going to cause annoyance, little transitions will keep the discourse from being confused: 'You know the extent of his devotion towards his parents, now hear of its extent towards his children,' and likewise in the other cases.

Some divide in such a way that they say the same things twice and announce what they are going to say in such a way that they simultaneously say what they are announcing; hence the most eloquent men have correctly taught that a partition should be clear and brief, neither wrapped up in obscure words nor burdened with superfluous ones.[396] Some also criticize the sort of partition that announces several things but adds one that makes the rest seem superfluous, such as this: 'I shall show that this man had no reason to commit the crime; I shall show that he had no will to do so; I shall show that he did not do it,' since if he should show 'that he did not do it,' the rest can seem pointless.[397] Likewise, 'I shall demonstrate that there was no reason; I shall demonstrate that no suspicion of

* * * * *

395 See Erasmus *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 231–392.
396 See Quintilian 4.5.26–8; see also Cicero *De inventione* 1.22.32.
397 See Quintilian 4.5.7–15.

that sort clings to this man's character and nature; I shall show that, even if he had wanted, he would not have had the opportunity; I shall show that he was in Rome at the time when the murder was being committed in Florence'; since the final argument is compelling, if it carries conviction, others seem excessive. Yet Pliny says that, because people's natures differ, one should try everything in speaking, like farmers who sow their seed quite plentifully to ensure that some at least will grow,[398] but this does not seem so relevant to the preacher. There is a criticism also of the sort of division that appends the species to the genus: 'I shall speak of this man's virtue; I shall speak of his modesty, of his wise judgment, justice, and fortitude,' since the general heading of virtue embraces these types. Partitions are also difficult when the parts are not coherent; we hear that some propose to treat their subject as follows: 'In the first place I shall expound to you a parable from the gospel, in the second I shall propound a theological question, in the third I shall relate the life of St Christopher,[399] finally I shall add a moral story from the *Gesta Romanorum*' (this is the name that they give to a work put together from manifest lies by someone, I suspect, who wanted to mock the twisting of theological allegories to a moral meaning).[400] The occurrence of this is more tolerable if the question arises from the gospel passage and if the saint's life fits the gospel passage and is worthy in other respects too of being reported in churches; nowhere should there be room for old wives' tales. But some err in thinking that this division should always be observed; because of this superstition it quite often happens that the question is frivolous or more suited to scholastic

* * * * *

398 Pliny *Epistle* 1.20.12–16

399 St Christopher was supposedly a martyr in the early church (third century) and known for his enormous strength and work as a ferryman; his cult is found throughout the ancient world. Over time his life and legend acquired numerous pious additions: Christopher ('Christ bearer') was often depicted on the south wall of churches to protect all who beheld it on that day. By Erasmus' time the cult of St Christopher was exceedingly popular, and he became the patron saint of sailors, travellers, etc. His feast day in the West was 25 July. See *Legenda aurea* II 10–14 and ODCC 'Christopher, St' 338.

400 *Gesta Romanorum* ed Hermann Oesterley (Berlin 1872). This work was a source of pious anecdotes, legends, and saints' deeds centred on vices and virtues, and was used extensively by preachers throughout Europe from the Middle Ages and into Erasmus' age. For a translation, see *Gesta Romanorum; or, Entertaining moral stories; invented by the monks as a fireside recreation, and commonly applied in their discourses from the pulpit: whence the most celebrated of our own poets and others, from the earliest times, have extracted their plots* trans Charles Swan, rev and corr Wynnard Hooper (New York 1957).

diatribes than to a sermon, and a life unworthy of the preacher's pulpit is recounted.[401]

Besides, it is so difficult to find the right partition that some of Cicero's partitions have been criticized by learned men, others called into doubt, only one praised without exception.[402] The difficulty in a case lies in the devising of the major parts and their arrangement into proper order once devised.

This should be my next topic before coming to argumentation; but since a knowledge of the various *status* [ie the basis on which a case turns, the point at issue][403] is associated with this theme, I have decided, in order to make the whole business more intelligible, first to touch here briefly upon the rhetorical precepts concerning the suasorial and encomiastic genres,[404]

* * * * *

401 Erasmus likely has in mind legendary lives of the saints; see *Moria* CWE 27 118 ('You can put George or Christopher or Barbara in that category if you need an example').

402 For comments on Cicero's partitions, see Quintilian 5.4.11–16. The one partition of Cicero praised without qualification by Quintilian (5.4.12) is that of the *Pro Murena*. ' "I understand, gentlemen, that the accusation falls into three parts, the first aspersing my client's character, the second dealing with his candidature for the magistracy, and the third with charges of bribery." These words make the case as clear as possible, and no one division renders any other superfluous.'

403 For *status* (basis), see Quintilian 3.6.1–62, especially 3.6.21: 'My own opinion has always been that, whereas there are frequently different *bases* of questions in connection with a cause, the *basis* of the cause itself is its most important point on which the whole matter turns.' The word *status* recurs frequently in this text. Greek and Roman rhetoricians defined a number of *status*, ie the points at issue on which a case turned: 1) The 'conjectural' (You did it: ie an argument to show guilt). The name is puzzling: the charge may be 'conjectural' in so far as it remains to be proved. But it is clear that the ancients were puzzled by the name, and Quintilian (3.6.30) gives a somewhat desperate suggestion for the origin of the term. 2) The opposite of the 'conjectural' is the *infitialis* (denial or negatory). 3) The 'qualitative': the accused may have done it, but the act was morally justified. See also Mack *Renaissance argument* 49–51 and 308. See introduction CWE 67 174 with n466 and 498–9 above.

404 Suasorial and encomiastic genres are two of the 'classical' three oratorical *genera*. Erasmus omits the third, the 'art of accusing and defending' (forensic or judicial). The suasorial and encomiastic genres are often referred to as the 'deliberative' and 'epideictic' (praise and blame) genres, respectively. Note that here Erasmus includes the biblical *genera* of St Paul (2 Tim 3:16: 'to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice') in the two classical *genera*. Ultimately all these *genera* have the ultimate aim of persuading. The suasorial *genus* is more explicitly involved with methods of bringing over or convincing

since the preacher is especially occupied with these. We shall add in passing what seems particular to exhortation, consolation, or rebuke;[405] for someone who is exhorting is urging courage, someone who is consoling is urging more moderate grief, someone who is rebuking is urging the recognition of one's fault and coming to one's senses: for this is the only goal of anyone who is rebuking in a Christian fashion.

The chief instruction concerning the suasorial type is that the speaker should consider what it is that he intends to urge and what kind of thing it is, who they are that are in his care, and who he himself is who is urging it.[406] For although a preacher urges only what is honourable, yet we urge what is honourable in different ways for the devout, for the wicked and rebellious, for those corrupted by perverse opinions, for the uncertain;[407] since honourable things are easily urged upon honourable persons, the wicked need to be treated like wild horses, the corrupted must have their error removed, the uncertain must be shown what is best. There is also some difference in nationality, for it would not be appropriate to speak among Germans in the same way as among Frenchmen or Italians, nor should one speak the same way before men outstanding in learning and rank and before an ignorant mob, again before monks or nuns and before those married or engaged. In addition, something that would receive a fair hearing from a bishop or from a man otherwise commended by his knowledge, age, and the holiness of his life would not receive such a hearing from a different sort of person.

What Quintilian calls suasorial others call deliberative, but there is no deliberation where there is no doubt. It can be doubted whether it is useful to recall married people to a vow of continence while they are still young; no one deliberates whether marriage should be honoured chastely and in good faith, but one urges them to pursue more keenly what everyone agrees should be pursued. Thus it can be questioned whether it is right to profess the monastic life without the knowledge or even against the will of one's

* * * * *

someone of one's point. Among the ancient authors of *suasoriae*, see Seneca the Elder *Suasoriae*; and Lewis A. Sussman *The Elder Seneca* (Leiden 1978) 11–12.

405 Cf 1 Tim 3:16; *Lingua* CWE 29 410–11.

406 See Quintilian 3.8.35–48.

407 See Quintilian 3.8.15. In preaching, there can be no distinction between the 'honourable' (*honestas*) and the 'expedient' (*utilitas*), as the two are by necessity identical, which coincides with Quintilian's point that wise men (eg Cicero) have made, 'that nothing can be expedient which is not good' (3.8.1). Also, 'If it should be necessary to assign one single aim to deliberative I should prefer Cicero's view that this kind of oratory is primarily concerned with what is honourable' (3.8.1).

parents, who need the attention of their children, but no one doubts that children owe their parents honour and obedience. Therefore, whenever we are persuading something that is unquestionably devout, we are exhorting rather than persuading[408] – except that some are so ignorant that they even doubt the obvious.

Now for the parts of the suasorial type, from which the division of the entire speech is taken and its propositions. The Stoics, who think that nothing that is not honourable is useful and that whatever is honourable is useful precisely because it is honourable,[409] would contend that there is but a single proposition when one is persuading; on the other hand, those who distinguish the useful from the honourable[410] nevertheless think that the other parts can be reduced to the useful, as though to a type. Though we admit that both of these statements can be perceptive and true, nevertheless it is more useful to an orator's training that they be separated 'with a coarser Minerva,' as they say.[411] And the category of the honourable is not simple:[412] for it can be understood as what is right in itself, and it can be taken as what is fair and seemly, and what is right by nature is not automatically seemly for

* * * * *

408 In this case the preacher is following St Paul in 'exhortation' (2 Tim 3:16). Below Erasmus locates exhortation within the *genus deliberativum*: 'Exhortation . . . is a part of the suasorial type rather than a different one.' See 567 below.

409 This Stoic teaching is explained by Cicero in *Paradoxa Stoicorum* (Paradox 1: 'That only what is morally noble is good') and in *De officiis*; see eg 3.4.20: 'Whatever is morally right [is] also expedient and nothing expedient that is not at the same time morally right . . .' See also *De inventione* 2.58.173: 'The greatest necessity is that of doing what is honourable . . .'

410 This category includes the Epicureans who considered pleasure (*voluptas*) the supreme good; see Cicero *De finibus* 1.16.50–4. See especially Lorenzo Valla *De vero bono* (or *De voluptate*), who examines the relationship between *honestum* and *utile*. For this theme in the Renaissance, see Charles Trinkaus *In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Humanist Thought* (Chicago 1970) 1 103–70.

411 See *Adagia* 1 i 37 *Crassa Minerva. Pingui Minerva. Crassiore Musa* 'With a stupid Minerva, a crass Minerva.' See also *Adagia* 1 i 38–42. It is clear from the adage that while it refers often to stupid people it can also mean, as here, 'in a less rigorous manner.' Minerva was the Roman goddess who presided over intellectual activities like study. (Translator's note)

412 See Cicero *De inventione* 2.51.157, where he speaks of the 'honourable' and the 'useful' in deliberative oratory. Regarding the honourable, Cicero says it is what 'draws us to it by its intrinsic merit, not winning us by any prospect of gain, but attracting us by its own worth . . . virtue, knowledge and truth' (2.52.157). In general Erasmus follows Cicero here in his discussion of the honourable (2.51.157–2.54.165). See also Lausberg §§233–5.

everyone. Many things are embraced according to their nature under the category of 'right': the proper, the devout, the just, the fair, the noble, the gentle, in short all kinds of virtues, plus the lawful, that is, what is prescribed by the laws and especially by sacred writings, commended by the examples of famous men and adopted by daily custom. But although an honourable reputation follows by nature an honourable deed and a dishonourable one follows a disgraceful deed, nonetheless some virtues are generally more attractive than others, just as some vices are more likely to bring disgrace than others; for a thief generally has a worse reputation than an adulterer, though the latter crime is more serious than the former, clemency is more popular than justice, and devotion towards one's parents brings more splendid applause than frugality and sobriety. Some have separated the praiseworthy from the honourable on the grounds that most mortals are more quickly moved by praise or disgrace than by virtue itself or evil, not because people should be left in this state of mind but because they should be led by it towards virtue as though by a teacher. Nor is the fear of disgrace foreign to Christian piety, for by scandalous action many are lured into sinning and malicious slander, thus dishonouring the name of God and the dignity of the church, just as they are glorified by the honourable reputation of good men.

Therefore, the category of the moral will include the issue of right and wrong (whether according to or contrary to nature), piety and impiety towards God and the saints, duty towards one's country, towards parents and children, towards teachers and those by whose kindness we have been cared for, all the categories of virtues and vices, which are countless; to these must be added the lawful, which is closely tied to the principle of equity, which tempers the laws. The same category will include tradition, that is, what has been approved or not approved by the authority and precedents of respected men, since it seems shameful for Christians to do things that were punished even by the laws of the heathen. Besides, to disobey the laws of God is to rebel against God. Whatever is done contrary to custom, even if vice is not involved, nevertheless disturbs public tranquillity by its very novelty. Moreover, the authority of tradition is so strong that the laws of popes and emperors quite often yield to it. Likewise, people regard as oracles the words and deeds of the men whose memory has seized human minds with a kind of awe. As I have said, the seemly and praiseworthy is associated with all of these.

The safe and the pleasant are assigned to the category of the beneficial,[413] which is properly situated in acquiring comforts or repelling

* * * * *

413 For 'beneficial' (*ad utilitatem*) see Cicero *De inventione* 2.55.166–2.56.170.

discomforts, for example, wealth, honours, friendships, leisure and tranquillity, and things of this sort; I do not see how the necessary, the possible, the easy can be assigned here.

The safe consists in guarding the security of oneself and of one's own,[414] for example, in respect to life and health.

Often hardship frightens people off from the virtuous course; pleasure attracts, for many are convinced that those who live soberly and continently for the sake of piety pass a grim and disagreeable life. Here the preacher will teach that those who cultivate true piety sincerely live much more cheerfully than those who seem to abound in every kind of worldly pleasure.

The necessary[415] is taken two ways, partly for that to which we are driven by fear of a greater ill, partly for that which simply cannot be avoided. For example, if a woman has been brought into such straits that she must suffer either rape or death, rape seems the lesser ill, since it is excused on account of necessity. In this case, however, it can be doubted if this is the preferable course; but if the situation has reached the point where either rape must be suffered or the rapist killed, Augustine thinks that rape should be accepted in preference.[416] An example of the other kind will be if someone should urge us to bear with patience the ills that God sends us, since they must be borne whether we want to or not, or if he should urge a miser to share with the needy the riches that he will soon give up completely, like it or not, or if he should persuade a priest to be willingly that which he is because he cannot be something else. This of course is what is meant by the proverb 'making a virtue of necessity.'[417]

But even though the absolutely impossible does not fall within the suasorial type, one must nevertheless consider first whether the action that is being contemplated is possible, for certain things seem ἀδύνατα [impossible]

* * * * *

414 Ibidem 2.56.169

415 'The necessary' (*necessarium*); ibidem 2.57.175 (*ac summa quidem necessitudo videtur esse honestatis*); also ibidem 2.25.75 ('Id fieri poterit, si demonstrabitur honestius, utilius, magis necessarium fuisse illud quod vitarit reus quam illud quod fecerit'). See especially Quintilian 3.8.22–5.

416 Arguably the best known example of this is Livy's account of Sextus Tarquinius' rape of Lucretia (1.57–9), the model of the chaste Roman wife. Lucretia committed suicide after her rape as proof of her chastity and to give other Roman matrons no precedent to cite her as an excuse for unchastity. Augustine rejects suicide under all circumstances and condemns as homicide Lucretia's slaying of herself; see *De civitate Dei* 1.17–22. Erasmus' interpretation of Augustine's meaning here is not quite accurate because there is no mention of killing the rapist, or even of killing in self-defence.

417 See Jerome Ep 21(6) CSEL 54 118 and *The Letters of St Jerome* ACW 33 114; Ep 54 (6) CSEL 54 471–2 and ACW 33 138–9; *Ad Rufinum* 3.2 CSEL 54 13–14 and ACW 33 31–2.

to some though they are not.[418] For example, many think it impossible for a youth to live continently, but this is not impossible, as is shown by the fact that many young men and maidens have lived quite continently. It is impossible for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God,[419] not in an absolute sense, but only if he does not cease to put his faith in riches. It is absolutely impossible for someone who has relapsed into sin after baptism to be restored to innocence through baptism. But people foolishly attempt the impossible and cling even more zealously to that which, once lost, cannot be restored, like youth and time past and the company of a deceased friend.

Many are deterred from cultivating virtue by what everyone says about it, that it involves a difficult effort.[420] Since this cannot be denied entirely, it could be mitigated, if we say that a great part of the difficulty is avoided if we passionately desire to be good, for nothing is difficult to a lover.[421] Then too, what is initially a bit annoying first becomes easier, then even pleasant, with a brief familiarity.[422] Since, then, the disagreeable is mixed with the agreeable in human affairs,[423] the person who is persuading will pick out the agreeable and amplify[424] it verbally; the disagreeable, if it cannot be denied and there is no use in dissembling, must be minimized. Someone who is dissuading will do the opposite. The difficulties are denied by showing that the disagreeable is really agreeable, or vice versa; for example, if someone were to say that disgrace that originated in the reaction of wicked men to one's good deeds is not disgrace but true glory, just as being praised by evil men on account of evil deeds is not glory but true disgrace, likewise conceding a dispute to an adversary is not a loss but a gain since peace of mind is worth more than a bit of money. Things that are unimportant or

* * * * *

418 See Quintilian 3.8.25.

419 Matt 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25

420 See *Adagia* II i 12 *Difficilia quae pulchra* 'Good things are difficult.'

421 *Amanti enim nihil difficile* 'Nothing is difficult to a lover.' See Cicero *Orator* 10.33: Magnum opus omnino et arduum, Brute, conamur; sed nihil difficile amanti puto; and Jerome Ep 22.40 *Ad Eustochium* (*To Eustochium*) NPNF 2nd series 6 40, CSEL 54 207: *Nihil amantibus durum est, nullus difficilis cupienti labor.* See also Bernard of Clairvaux *Sermones in ramis palmarum, Sermo 1* in *Bernardi opera* ed J. Leclercq and H.M. Rochais (Rome 1968) V 44: *quoniam amanti nihil difficile est*.

422 See Quintilian 3.8.26–35.

423 *In rebus humanis incommoda commodis permixta sunt* 'The disagreeable is mixed with the agreeable in human affairs.' Cf *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 2.31.50; Cicero *De officiis* 3.4.20–3.8.35.

424 Erasmus discusses the technique of amplification below; see book 3 773–808.

have little weight for persuasion are concealed. The ways in which each of these is done will be discussed when we reach amplifications.

But let no one think that all these parts that we have mentioned must always be used,[425] for you could hardly find a theme to which they would all apply; rather the case itself will show which should be employed. In division, as was said before, either none should be promised or only the important ones. The same thing should be done here as in the loci of arguments:[426] one should knock at every door but choose those which can be of use. For example, someone who wants to encourage a youth to marry has various arguments:[427] the first, that it is especially in accordance with nature,[428] so that by the propagation of each person the species becomes immortal in so far as possible, since individuals cannot; next, what the Creator himself has founded[429] and Christ has honoured[430] is honourable; third, what sacred texts approve and what is commemorated by the church among its sacraments is devout;[431] fourth, it is useful to have a wife as a servant to take domestic concerns in large part upon herself and to carry them out faithfully, to have children who serve their father sincerely; fifth, it is pleasant to have an individual as the companion of all one's fortunes, to have sweet children in whom a man may in a way grow young again and outlive himself; sixth, it is just and fair that a citizen should increase with good citizens the state to which he owes the fact of his birth; seventh, it is seemly for a young person to look after children, which is not so appropriate for the

* * * * *

425 See Quintilian 3.8.26.

426 For 'loci of arguments,' see Quintilian 5.10.20–125. See below 614–96.

427 See *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 203–438; *De conscribendis epistolis* CWE 25 130–48.

428 Erasmus adapts some of the 'loci of arguments' given in Cicero's *De inventione* 2.15.48–2.51.154 (eg the honourable, the useful, the equitable, etc), which are available to the prosecution and the defence in a judicial case, while adding his own in this example of encouraging youth to marry. See Chomarat *Grammaire* II 948–54 (4. Argumentation et Demonstration: *Laus et Vituperatio Matrimonii*), which analyses Erasmus' presentation of the pros and cons of matrimony to demonstrate the use of rhetorical arguments.

429 Gen 2:18, 24

430 See John 2:1–11; Matt 19:3–9; Mark 10:2–12.

431 Here Erasmus places marriage among the sacraments of the church. For Erasmus' thinking on marriage, see Michael J. Heath's introduction to *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 203–13, especially 205–6, 212, and of course Erasmus' treatise itself, and his *Encomium matrimonii* of 1518 in *De conscribendis epistolis* CWE 25 129–45. See also John W. O'Malley's introduction to CWE 69, especially xxiv–xxx.

aged; eighth, what even the laws of the heathen have honoured is lawful, especially if the child that is born shows that it was a true and chaste marriage; ninth, what has been approved in both word and deed by the most praised men is praiseworthy. An argument can also be made from safety,[432] since a continent youth exposes himself to the danger of forbidden pleasures, or from necessity, since it is impossible for a youth to live continently for a long time, or because the human race is unable to reproduce in any other way. This proposition could also be based on benefits received, since a wife brings a dowry, and many friends are made through kinship, for the word benefit[433] has wide application and suggests many lines of argument, as do pleasure and other considerations. No argument will be based on the fact that it is easy and possible.[434] On the other hand, someone who is dissuading a monk from marriage will not resort to the argument that it is in accordance with nature, unless you twist it to mean that it is contrary to nature for someone who is dead to the world to be born to the world. He will base his argument on the fact that it is illegitimate and in conflict with Scripture. He will argue from what is proper and laudable: for though some monk may take a wife, yet the trumpet of foul repute follows.[435] He will argue from the impossible: for he has now no faith to pledge, having consigned it once to God. It is not necessary to take anything from the other parts. Likewise, someone who is discouraging swearing will say that what Christ has expressly forbidden[436] is dishonourable; in addition, he will say that it is not safe, since every man who swears exposes himself to the danger of perjury, whether because the habit of swearing gradually induces perjury, or because the human will is changeable, or because it often happens that you cannot follow through on what you have sworn. But enough about the suasorial type, at least as far as applies to the present subject.

* * * * *

432 On 'safety' (*tutum*), see Quintilian 3.8.26–8; Cicero *De inventione* 2.58.174; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.4.8–9.

433 On 'benefit' (*utilitas*), see Quintilian 3.8.1; Cicero *De officiis* 1.3.9–10, 3.2.7–3.33.121 (*utilitas/honestum*); and Lausberg §§234–6.

434 See Quintilian 3.8.26–9.

435 For 'trumpet of foul repute' (*foedae buccina famae*), see Juvenal *Satires* 14.152.

436 Matt 5:34–7: 'Again, you have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn." But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let what you say be simply "Yes" or "No"; anything more than this comes from evil.' See *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 106–8.

For the preacher that we are training here, the encomiastic type[437] is generally occupied in extolling the praises of God or of the saints, since funeral orations are not so much in use among ecclesiastics now as they once were;[438] in fact doxologies[439] are more often sung in the churches today than proclaimed orally. Yet God's majesty must frequently be exalted; for example, when we are deterring from sin, it is appropriate to stress the majesty that infinitely surpasses not only the eloquence but the understanding of all men, so that it seems a more detestable crime to scorn him by sinning or to prefer any created thing to him, whose greatness is such that there is nothing anywhere in heaven or on earth that can be compared to him, even if you imagine creatures far more excellent than the seraphim.[440] He is described as seeing everything past, present, and future with a single and absolute gaze, lest anyone who transgresses in unspoken thought or in secret should hope that he can hide.[441] He is described as supremely just, so that no one can promise himself freedom from punishment for his wickedness.[442] He is described as of infinite mercy, so that no one despairs of forgiveness for his sins if he returns to his heart.[443] He is described as supremely truthful, so that no one mistrusts his promises. The Greeks named this the ἐπιδεικτικόν [epideictic genre],[444] from its 'display' of course, but the preacher does not aim only at having us understand God's greatness; he hunts out from everywhere what is conducive to living well,[445] namely that we should revere

* * * * *

437 For 'encomiastic type' (*laudatorium*), see Quintilian 3.4.12–13 (*laudativum*).

438 Funeral orations delivered by clergymen were not that uncommon; see McManamon *Funeral Oratory*. And see Erasmus' *Oratio funebris* CWE 29 16–30, written c 1489.

439 Ie rendering praise to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The simple doxology is the *Gloria patri et filio et spiritui sancto*; the greater is the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, which is recited or sung at the liturgy after the Kyrie Eleison. Erasmus gives other examples of doxologies below.

440 'Seraphim' were the highest order of angels; it stood above the throne of God (Isa 6:2–7).

441 See Boethius *Consolatio philosophiae* 5.6.

442 Ibidem 5.3

443 Cf Isa 46:8; Deut 30:20; 1 Sam 7:3; Jer 24:7.

444 See Quintilian 3.4.12–13 for his discussion of the word ἐπιδεικτικόν in the third *genus* of oratory; and Lausberg §§61.3 and 239.

445 The art of 'living well' (*ad bene vivendum*; *bene beateque vivere*) is often spoken of by Plato and by Cicero (eg *De finibus* 1.5, 14; *De officiis* 1.4.13, 1.6.19; *De republica* 4.3.3: *ad illam civium beate et honeste vivendi societatem*); Erasmus of courses places this within a Christian context and understands the encomiastic sermon as urging the revering and loving of 'the Supremely Good.' In what

the supremely powerful, above all that we should love the supremely good. This will be the first part of an encomiastic sermon.

The second will be about the generosity of the divinity towards the human race, which the Father created so excellently and for whose sake he established the world and all that is contained in the world, which the Son so mercifully restored from its ruin, which the Holy Spirit props up and sustains with so many gifts and comforts in this wretched life. From this arises not only thanksgiving but also a desire to imitate. He so loved his enemies, let us love our neighbours; he is kindly towards all, let us too strive to serve our neighbours; he freely forgave us all our sins, let us forgive those of our brothers, and – not to belabour the point – let me say that the same goes for all the rest. Indeed, Christian prayers also generally have a doxology combined when they begin, 'God, from whom all good things proceed,'[446] 'God, whose nature is to pity and to spare,'[447] then conclude 'you who live and reign,' etc.

The third part will be taken up with how the great power, wisdom, and goodness of God shine in everything created, so that wherever we turn our eyes or mind we celebrate the Craftsman in everything.

The fourth will be how wondrously God has worked in holy men, whom he particularly selects so that he may be glorified in them and through them even among wicked men. This example of the laudatory genre is now more frequent in churches than those earlier ones, and was not uncommon even among the ancients; the panegyrical sermons of Basil, the Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustine show this.[448]

Here some of the things that rhetoricians have committed to writing are going to be of use.[449] For praises are drawn from the past, such as when the oracles, miracles, or prodigies that preceded the Nativity are reported,[450] and

* * * * *

follows, one is much reminded of Ignatius of Loyola's later composition of the 'Contemplation to Attain Love of God' (*Contemplatio ad amorem dei in nobis excitandum* or *Contemplatio ad amorem spiritualem*) in the fourth week of his *Exercitia spiritualia*.

446 'God, from whom all good things proceed' (*Deus, a quo bona cuncta procedunt . . .*); see *Corpus orationum* II CCSL 160A 109 1085.

447 'God, whose nature is to pity and to spare' (*Deus cui proprium est misereri et parcere . . .*); see *Corpus orationum* II CCSL 160A 133–6 1139–44.

448 For these panegyrics of the saints, see 502–4 above.

449 See especially Quintilian 3.7.10–20; and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.6.10–3.8.15; and *De inventione* 2.59.177–8.

450 Luke 1; Matt 1:18–25

how Isaac was promised to Sarah,[451] who had already passed menopause; oracles, as Rebecca felt the twins struggling in the womb and learns from an oracle what those who were being born will be like;[452] in the same way John the Baptist was promised to Zechariah,[453] and Elizabeth sensed the fetus striving in her womb to greet the Virgin,[454] and Bernard's mother was told, 'You will be the mother of an excellent pup.'[455] The present time regards the whole sequence of life from birth right to life's end, except that what happens to infants seems to belong to the past, and any remarkable incident seems to be more a forecast of virtue than virtue itself.[456] Character can be praised in the young, since it can also be criticized. To future time pertain the prodigies that follow death, and the spring of saving water that leaps out where a martyr's severed head touched the ground, or oil effective for medical treatment oozing spontaneously from a monument, or demons crushed by martyrs' tombs, which should be regarded as divine witnesses.

We should also see to it that, in the case of saints, we praise external properties in such a way that we show that they were acquired by virtue and industry,[457] or if they came by chance, that they came about without wrongdoing and were treated with contempt and dispensed for pious purposes; for there are some things that it is fairer to have lost than to have won.

Let the same instruction stand for physical advantages: beauty, good health, sharp senses, a noble face, eloquence, and whatever else belongs to this type. Those things do indeed commend virtue through themselves, but they are more attractive if they have been acquired or increased by honesty of spirit, for a calm and modest spirit commends the body's native beauty, which envy, anger, luxury, and drunkenness disfigure. These things often interfere with health as well, as internal vices pass into the body's external

* * * * *

451 Gen 18:10–14
452 Gen 25:22–8
453 Luke 1:11–20
454 Luke 1:41
455 See William of Saint Thierry *Vita Bernardi Claraevallensis (vita prima)* 1.2 PL (1860) 185 227.
456 See Quintilian 3.7.10–18.
457 Erasmus adapts Quintilian's precepts to panegyrics of saints; see 3.7.6: 'The proper function however of panegyric (*laus*) is to amplify and embellish its themes. This form of oratory is directed in the main to the praise of gods and men . . .; see also 3.7.10–18.

condition.[458] And so it is not enough for the preacher to praise the youthfulness of a martyr, which human sentiment naturally favours, unless he turns it to a marvel of chastity, sobriety, gentleness, thoughtfulness, gravity, constancy – things rare in the flush of youth, and for that very reason having them is fairer and more admirable – and so we shall say that there was nothing youthful in him except his years; we shall praise his appearance by saying that God placed a most beautiful mind in a beautiful home. Thus St Jerome praises in Paula, the mother of Eustochium, the charm of beauty, which neither disease nor death had extinguished;[459] thus in Paul of Concordia he praises a flourishing old age, an image of immortality, and a likeness of the resurrection.[460]

Likewise, among external advantages, the country must not simply be praised,[461] but he will adapt its nature as well towards true praise: 'And so God wanted this man to be born in what is by far the most celebrated and noble city so that he might shine more widely in his virtue as though placed upon a lofty stage.'[462]

* * * * *

458 This theme occurs often in Erasmus; see eg book 2 466–7.

459 See Jerome Ep 101:29 NPNF 2nd series 6 195–212; see also Ep 45 (to Asella) ibidem 58–60.

460 Jerome Ep 10 *Ad Paulum senem Concordiae* to Paul, an Old Man of Concordia CSEL 54 35–8; NPNF 2nd series 6 11–12. In 374 Jerome wrote to this centenarian, Paul of Concordia, requesting the commentaries of Fortunatian, the history of Aurelius Victor, and the letters of Novatian; in exchange Jerome sent him the *Vita Pauli primi eremitae* (*Life of Paul the First Hermit*).

461 See Quintilian 3.7.10.

462 For 'external advantages,' see eg *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.6.10: 'To External Circumstances belong such as can happen by chance, or by fortune, favourable or adverse: descent, education, wealth, kinds of power, titles to fame, citizenship, friendships, and the like, and their contraries.' See eg Gregory of Nazianzus' funeral oration for Basil the Great (*Funebris oratio in laudem Basilii Magni*) in its treatment of Basil's 'external circumstances': '(3) If I saw that he gloried in his birth or in the advantages of his birth, or, in general, in any of those petty objects of pride to men who have their eyes fixed upon the ground, a new catalogue of heroes would have to be made. How many details could I have gathered from his ancestors to redound to his glory! Nor would I have had to yield any advantage to history in this respect, possessing this advantage above all, that my subject is embellished not by fictions and fable, but by facts themselves to which there are many witnesses. On his father's side, Pontus furnishes us with many narratives, not at all inferior to the ancient wonders attached to the place in which all history and poetry abound. Many, too, are furnished by this, my native land, noble Cappadocia, goodly nurse of youth no less than horses. Hence, we can match his mother's family with

It is agreed that the good are born from the good,[463] but what is most sublime is not merely to replicate the virtues of one's ancestors but even to surpass them.[464] It is also grounds for true praise that the nobility of his parents does not detract from the modesty and sobriety of a holy man, who gloried that he became the brother of the humble because he was reborn in Christ,[465] rather than that he took his place among the nobility because he was descended from distinguished parents. Nobody chooses his parents; hence being descended from the wealthy, distinguished, or powerful is not guaranteed praise, but love of godliness – to have held the portraits[466] of one's ancestors in contempt – that is the stuff of true praise. But to avoid my becoming too much of a bore by hunting down individual instances, our aim should be, to put it briefly, that whatever advantages of this sort were available to him should all be spread around for the benefit of others.

One must treat in a similar manner certain properties of the mind that the evil share with the good, such as the capacity to learn, quickness of intellect, natural cleverness (which is praised as a characteristic of Athanasius),[467] a natural grace in speaking, a faithful and retentive memory. Now, in treating the properties of the mind that are not shared with the wicked, two arrangements are possible:[468] one, to report through all the stages of his

* * * * *

that of his father. As for military commands, high civil offices, and power in imperial courts, and again, as to wealth and lofty thrones and public honors, and splendours of eloquence, what family has been more often or more highly distinguished?'

463 Cf Quintilian 3.7.6–22.

464 Cf Quintilian 3.7.10–11.

465 Cf 1 Pet 1:23.

466 Latin (*imagines*); Erasmus likely refers here to the contemporary practice of artists painting portraits of wealthy noble families and their members; he also might be referring to the privilege of the Roman nobility of keeping images (*imagines*) of their illustrious ancestors in the atria of their homes. These images were worn at family funerals to recall their ancestors' virtue, distinction, and service to the republic as well as to encourage the living, especially, to emulate the deeds of their house. See Polybius *Histories* 6.53–4; Pliny *Historia naturalis* 35.6–7; Tacitus *Annales* 3.5–6 (mention of these *imagines* at the funeral of Drusus and their absence at the funeral of his son Germanicus) and 4.9 (funeral of Drusus, son of Germanicus). See also Cicero *In Pisonem* 1.1 and *De lege agraria oratio secunda* 1.

467 See book 2 484 and 491 above, and Rufinus *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia, Books 10 and 11* trans Philip R. Amidon (New York 1997) 26–32. Theodor Mommsen ed *Eusebius Werke* in *Die Kirchengeschichte* ed E. Schwartz and T. Mommsen II-2, Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller (Leipzig 1908).

468 See Quintilian 3.7.15.

life what he did or said in each; the other, to describe the virtues that were outstanding in him, say chastity, patience, modesty, generosity towards the needy. For different virtues have shone more brightly in different men; for example, in Job patience is outstanding, in Abraham hospitality, faith, and obedience, in Moses mildness, as in David, in Paul a most burning love and marvellous fervour for spreading Christ's glory, in Joseph chastity,[469] and so on and so forth. I do not think it appropriate for the preacher to follow the practice that some teach of turning certain vices to their kindred virtues when praising – for example, to interpret uncleanliness as frugality, austerity as gravity, fawning as affability – and to corrupt virtues to kindred vices when criticizing – for example, that squandering is close to liberality and luxury to splendour.[470] This latter practice is worthy of no good man; the other could perhaps be excused if a defendant were at risk before unfair judges or if someone had to be reconciled to someone of a savage nature, or he was going to console someone in danger from despair. And yet some of the ancients strove to do this in the case of saints, minimizing their sins or turning crimes to virtues through figures of speech, such as when David's adultery is extenuated together with its associated murder,[471] or Christ's being forsworn three times by Peter[472] is excused on the grounds that he spoke devoutly and only deceived the wicked with the ambiguity of his words. But the very reason why Scripture commemorates some horrendous crimes of saints is to provide an example for everyone that there are no trespasses so horrendous that the Lord's mercy is shut off, so long as the sinner turns to penitence; and so let kings who delight in adulteries because David, whom they have followed in his error, was an adulterer follow him in his penitence too.[473] Thus Peter and the Magdalene have many

* * * * *

469 Chomarat notes that Erasmus refers here to Joseph, son of Israel, whose chastity was made apparent in the story of Potipher's wife (Gen 39:7–12).

470 See Quintilian 3.7.25, where he cites Aristotle as the source for this practice: 'Aristotle also urges a point . . . to the effect that, since the boundary between vice and virtue is often ill defined, it is desirable to use words that swerve a little from the actual truth, calling a rash man brave, a prodigal generous, a mean man thrifty; or the process may, if necessary, be reversed. But this the ideal orator, that is to say a good man, will never do, unless perhaps he is led to do so by consideration for the public interest.'

471 David committed adultery with Bathsheba, wife of Uriah, David's general, whom he then had placed in a position on the battlefield that brought about his death. See 2 Samuel 11.

472 Matt 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:56–62; John 18:17, 25–7

473 For David's penitence, see 2 Samuel 11 & 12; Psalm 51 (Vulg 50).

imitators of their crimes, very few of their tears and penitence. And so the crimes of saints, which canonical Scripture mentions, should neither be exaggerated rashly nor extenuated unfairly. We read that the Magdalene, who anointed the Lord's head, was a sinner in the city;[474] it is enough to say this, and one should not make her a common prostitute (the Pharisee's indignation that Jesus suffered himself to be touched by her shows that she had an unfavourable reputation).[475] Yet the exaggerating and minimizing of trespasses has a place in consolation and in rebuke so long as nothing is added to or subtracted from the truth. An example of the former will be: 'King David, who punished adultery in others, himself dragged off to adultery the wife of a faithful man and friend, and added cruelty to his foul deed: through trickery he arranged to have her husband killed, not in the sudden heat of anger but by deliberate plan, and yet with two words – *peccavi Domino* [I have sinned before the Lord][476] – he earned forgiveness. Why do you despair, who were provoked by insults and, scarcely in control of yourself from anger, killed someone who harassed and attacked you?' This of the latter: 'Peter denied but did it frightened by unexpected terror; he denied a mortal whose glory had not yet shone upon the minds of men; he denied as a Jew who had not yet drunk the heavenly Spirit; and yet how soon he recovered himself at the sight of Jesus, how bitterly he wept withdrawing from the Lord's gaze.[477] Why do you flatter yourself with the example of Peter, you who willingly run to the Turks to deny a Christ already preached to the world, already reigning in heaven, to whom you swore allegiance at your baptism, whose Spirit you have drunk? The Magdalene, who was only a woman of Judea, came of her own free will to Jesus and did not blush to take on the role of a penitent at the haughty table of a Pharisee; you who are burdened by far greater trespasses stubbornly refuse the mystical medicine of the church, and you who have not blushed to commit foul deeds publicly: do you blush to confess your trespasses in secret when so easy a remedy is at hand?'

I shall also advise that those properties or rather advantages that the good share with the wicked can be mentioned through paralipsis,[478] in this

* * * * *

474 See Luke 7:37, 8:2.
475 Luke 7:39
476 2 Sam 12:13
477 See Luke 18:60–2.
478 On 'paralipsis' (*occupatio*), see Cicero *De oratore* 3.53.205 (*occupatio, anteoccupatio*), 'forestalling the other side's case'; anticipating an opponent's objections. The device is often referred to as *occultatio*: see *Orator* 40.138 (*ut ante occupet*

way: 'I am not going to praise in this saint the glorious brilliance of his stock, the glory and rank of his parents, his great worldly wealth and honours; for why should I praise in him things that he himself either discarded or scorned on account of Christ? He should be described instead from the true properties by which he won Christ's admiration rather than from his own, and by which he was a good odour[479] to the whole church of Christ for the salvation of many.'

But since praising the virtues of the mind too extravagantly causes ill will, it should be tempered by also praising the person's modesty, which caused him somehow not to know himself; and although he was highly regarded by all good men, he alone did not share this opinion, claiming nothing for himself despite his excellent qualities, but assigning all the praise to God,[480] to whose gratuitous generosity he attributed whatever he had that was truly worthy of praise. One should take much greater care to do this if it happens that some living man has to be praised, for praising the deceased is safer and less prone to envy; here then we will shape our praise in such a way that we speak of the gifts of God in him rather than of the man himself. But those fawning orations, which ambassadors or orators use before the mighty in epithalamia, in thanksgivings, and in panegyrics, are to be banished from the churches to the marketplace or to the halls of magnates or wealthy men, though today (for shame) we have reached such a point of impudence that both the priest in the very mass and the preacher in public assemblies frequently flatter popes and princes abjectly,[481] and none do this more indecently than those who profess such a style of life that there is no one whom anyone should flatter less. There should never be a place

* * * * *

quod videat opponi); *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.27.37 (*occultatio*): 'Paralipsis [*occultatio*] occurs when we say that we are passing by, or do not know, or refuse to say that which precisely now we are saying . . .'

479 'Good odour' (2 Cor 2:15)

480 Cf Ps 115:1 (Vulg 113:9); see also *In psalmum 4* CWE 63 217: 'The most certain way is to attribute all our misfortunes to ourselves and all our good fortune to the generosity of the deity, always conscious of Paul's dictum: "By the grace of God I am what I am." [1 Cor 15:10] It cannot be called self-praise to recall God's gifts and to give him the credit . . .'

481 Erasmus may be recalling his attendance at the Good Friday sermon on 6 April 1509 in the papal chapel at Rome before Pope Julius II. See his account of this in *Ciceronianus*, where Bulephorus tells of 'what he heard with my own ears' (though he does not give the name of the speaker); see CWE 28 384–5 and nn306, 307. For a corrective to Erasmus' comments about this sermon and its preacher, see O'Malley *Praise and Blame* 114 and n147.

for fawning – I do not mean among Christians, but not even among learned men; and yet, if some foolishness must be done, the theatre is fitter for it than the temple, the hall than the church. But so much for the moral aspects of the subject.[482]

What follows belongs to the art of rhetoric: external advantages can be used in two ways, whether in praise or in criticism. Under 'external advantages' I include physical advantages also, since according to the Stoics these too are outside a person's control;[483] either way they are effective, whether for praise or blame. For just as poverty is disgraceful for someone who has brought it upon himself through luxury and idleness, or who is impatient of it and makes his living by dishonourable means such as pimping, slander, and flattery, so it is honourable for someone who has willingly brought poverty upon himself out of his love of piety, whether from generosity towards the poor or in some other way, or who bears it cheerfully though he could grow rich if he wished. The former will be called shamefully poor in resources, but far more shamefully poor in virtues; the latter will be called richer in true possessions precisely because he scorned false ones. Likewise, wealth is disgraceful for someone who has been enriched by fraud and plunder or whose riches only feed his vices, and he is rich only for himself, extravagant towards his cooks and whores, mean towards Christ's needy members. On the other hand, it is honourable for him to whom they have come spontaneously and unsought, who possesses as though he did not possess, who regards his possessions as more for others than for himself, rich to the needy, needy to himself,[484] who has convinced himself to think that he is more truly steward than master[485] and interprets them as given by God so that he may be the steward towards the members of Christ, who would be able to be corrupted by wealth neither towards arrogance nor

* * * * *

482 For 'moral aspects' (*mores*), see Quintilian 6.2.8–9: '*Mores* are the [emotions that] persuade and induce a feeling of goodwill.'

483 See eg Epictetus *Enchiridion* 1–3; and Cicero *De finibus* 4.10.25–4.11.26: '. . . the Stoics, though recognizing, it is true, the primary objects of nature, yet allow no connection between these and their Ends or sum of Goods. In making the primary objects "preferred," so as to admit a certain principle of choice among things, they seem to be following nature, but in refusing to allow them to have anything to do with happiness, they again abandon nature.' See also *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.6.10.

484 Cf 2 Cor 8:9: 'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.'

485 Cf Titus 1:7–9.

towards cruelty nor towards luxury nor towards other pleasures. Thus a famous family is dishonourable to those who obscure their own vices with the glory won by their ancestors' accomplishments, and who have no trace of nobility except their portraits, and for whom the family's brilliance serves only to make them wicked with greater disgrace; thus too the disgrace of ancestors incriminates wicked sons. And so John the Baptist in the Gospel calls wicked Jews born from the wicked a generation of vipers,[486] and the Lord ironically bids them, because their ancestors had killed the prophets, to fill the measure of their fathers by killing the Lord of the prophets.[487] Likewise, those born of obscure stock can be criticized on the grounds that they won their nobility by crimes. Someone who is well born will be praised differently,[488] on the grounds that, thanks to his virtue, he has added more glory to his ancestors than he received from them, and that he has obscured their light with his own brilliance just as the lesser stars along with the moon itself are hidden beside the sun's brightness,[489] and that he has always scorned ancestral lineages, conducting himself the more humbly the greater he was in worldly estimation, thinking it true nobility that through his faith he was a son of God, a brother of Jesus Christ, that he had a close kinship with all the saints. On the other hand, someone who was born from an obscure or lowly family or country, or from unknown or humble parents, should be praised for the very reason that he has accomplished something both rare and outstanding in turning out devout though born from the impious, in outshining his ancestors by his own virtue;[490] for someone must be outstandingly good if he has contracted no contagion either from the barbarousness of his nationality or from the corrupt character of his parents. Jonathan's good faith and sincerity will be more praiseworthy because, though born of a wicked father, he was utterly unlike him.[491] St Bernard praises Malachy because,[492] though born among the Irish, a savage nation (as they were then), his character was in no way cruel, and he absorbed no more of the barbarism of his nationality than fish do of sea salt; and among philosophers Anacharsis[493]

* * * * *

486 Matt 3:7
487 Matt 23:31–2
488 Cf Quintilian 3.7.10.
489 Cf Cicero *De finibus* 3.14.45.
490 Cf Quintilian 3.7.10.
491 Jonathan was the son of Saul, first king of the Israelites, and devoted friend of David. See 1 Sam 19:1–7, 20:4–42.
492 See St Bernard *Life and Death of Saint Malachy the Irishman* (*Vita sancti Malachiae*) trans Robert T. Meyer (Kalamazoo, Mich 1978).
493 Anacharsis: sixth-century Scythian prince said to be born of an Athenian mother and noted as one of the Seven Sages of the ancient world; see Diogenes

is more famous because he was a Scythian by birth and not an Athenian, nor was Onesimus less valued by Paul, whom he commended to everlasting memory in a private letter, on account of his lowly condition.[494] We have touched a bit upon appearance above. If he has an unattractive one, it will be said in criticism that nature has represented in his very body the image of his most foul mind; it will be said in praise that he has abundantly compensated for his physical flaw with outstanding virtues, and anyone who should look more closely into him will find that under the despicable cover of his body is concealed a most beautiful mind capable of making everyone fall in love with it. Wretchedly ugly is the man from whom God and his angels shrink; most beautiful is the man whom God loves. To avoid becoming too wordy, I leave the rest to the reader's talent.

There is a certain method of praising through comparison, more common in Greek than in Latin; thus in Plato, Alcibiades praises Socrates by comparing him to satyrs, Marsyas, and Sileni.[495] At all events, though I admit that comparison can apply in panegyrics, it seems foolish to me for the whole sermon to consist of a comparison. That the reader may understand what it is to praise by comparison, I shall give an example: for instance, if someone who is praising Emperor Maximilian[496] were to compare him with some men who are supreme by universal consent, say with Alexander the Great, with Julius Caesar, with Trajan, with Probus,[497] with Marcus Aurelius, and were to take what was outstanding in each and show that Maximilian was in all respects equal or even greater. I think that the preacher should use this type rather sparingly, either because it is ineffectual or because, as the proverb says, every comparison is invidious;[498] yet some in our time have used it immoderately, not without grave offence to the congregation. It happened that, while a preacher was escorting St Francis to all the orders of the heavenly hierarchy, the confessors, the teachers, the virgins, the martyrs, the prophets and – greater than the prophets – John the Baptist, then to the very seraphim, and he heard everywhere, 'Rise higher,' he came at last to the most sacred Virgin who sits on the right of the Son, and he heard,

* * * * *

Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* 1.8.101–5; Lucian *Anacharsis*; and Erasmus *Apophthegmata* CWE 38 790–6. Most of the deeds and sayings attributed to him are of questionable authenticity. See 'Anacharsis' in *Classical Tradition* 42–3.

494 Onesimus was a slave of Philemon; see Philemon; cf Col 4:9.

495 Plato *Symposium* 215A–B

496 Maximilian of Hapsburg, Holy Roman Emperor from 19 August 1493 to 12 January 1519; CEBR II 410–14.

497 Probus (Marcus Aurelius) 232–82, Roman emperor (276–82); see OCD 879.

498 Not a common proverb, nor one of Erasmus' *Adagia*.

'Rise higher.' Since there was nothing left but the Son of God, the pious man did not dare dethrone Christ and yet kept shouting that a place worthy of him had not yet been found; when this encomiast hesitated and then asked where we will place our Father, one of the more disagreeable members of the congregation said, 'If you need a place, place him in my place' and immediately left the sermon.[499] And none have extolled Francis more invidiously in their praises than those who have been most unlike him in their character and life. On the other hand, those who call themselves Augustinians used to praise their own Augustine and did not refrain from slanders against Francis; the Dominicans used to praise Dominic and Thomas[500] and Catherine of Siena[501] beyond what was right. Of course this is the human emotion that causes each territory to favour the praises of its patron the way that the Romans favour Peter, the Greeks Paul, the Parisians Denys,[502] the Swiss Gallus,[503] the Germans the emperor Heinrich,[504] the English George,[505]

* * * * *

499 For the background of this preaching by Fra Bernardino da Feltre (1439–94), see Emile V. Telle '"To every thing there is a season. . .": Ways and Fashions in the Art of Preaching on the Eve of the Religious Upheaval in the Sixteenth Century' ERSY 2 (1982) 13–24, especially 23.

500 Ie Dominic de Guzmán (c 1170–1221), founder of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans); see Jacopo da Varagine *Legenda aurea* I 44–57; for Thomas Aquinas, see 495 above.

501 Catherine of Siena (1347–80), Dominican tertiary, visionary, and politico-religious activist for Florence and the papacy; she was canonized in 1461 by Pope Pius II. Many legends and stories were written about her after her death. Erasmus took issue with the ones regarding her childhood; see Ep 447:275–7. See 'Catherine, St, of Siena' ODCC 304–5.

502 St Denys was once believed to be the disciple won by Paul at the Areopagus in Athens (Acts 17:34) and author of the mystical works on the angels and the heavenly hierarchy; he was supposed to have migrated to Gaul where he became first bishop of Paris. In 270 he was martyred; his remains rest at the Benedictine monastery of Saint Denys outside Paris. See Anne Lombard-Jourdan *'Montjoie et saint Denis!' Le centre de la Gaule aux origins de Paris et de Saint-Denis* (Paris 1989). See also 'Denys l'Aréopagite (le pseudo-)' DS III 244–94; and Andrew Louth *Denys the Areopagite* (Wilton, Conn 1989).

503 St Gallus (c 550–c 650), Frankish or Alemannian (?) missionary, companion of Columbanus; he is believed to have stayed in present-day Switzerland near Lake Constance when Columbanus went on to Italy to found the monastery at Bobbio. See 'Gall, St' ODCC 651 and ODS 211.

504 Heinrich II, emperor (972, ruled 1014–24), last of the Saxon Holy Roman emperors, he promoted monastic and ecclesiastical reform and was seen as a pious champion of the church. He was canonized in 1146. See ODS 245–6.

505 Very little is known about St George, patron saint of England, but around the twelfth century he was credited with slaying the dragon, a story which appears

and so on; for I want this said only for the sake of an example. Sometimes a quarrel turns into a battle; the saints do not like to be praised in that way.

Now, it is not a matter of recent precedent to commend saints to the emotions of an uninformed congregation by inventing miracles, and some have become more famous thanks to this technique; but this glory is not pleasing to the saints, who ascribe to God whatever true praise they have. The sellers of potions, who set up a table in the marketplace and show teeth they have extracted, stones cut out of bladders, testimonials of powerful men they have restored from death, and recount their glorious deeds for profit's sake, provide an ugly example. Not unlike these are the men the world has endured too long, who carry about relics and statues of saints, boasting with utter impudence of miracles that were never performed, and sometimes, with more than scurrilous impudence, offer hay or straw taken perhaps from some latrine or barn for simple souls to kiss; they show coals taken from their hearth, pretending that Laurence[506] was roasted on them. The true preacher should stay as far away as possible from these examples, for there should be a very considerable difference between a pastor and an impostor.

He will speak rather seldom to the congregation about saints, especially those who are not commended by the witness of Holy Scripture. Christ is abundantly fertile, so that a preacher could not lack a theme for speaking even if he wanted to preach four times every day; but if an occasion should ever demand that one must speak about the saints as well, let the greatest part of the sermon nevertheless be given over to the Gospel and the Epistle.[507] If the story is incredible, let him not even touch upon it. If it is plausible and well known and comes from some serious author, it is not necessary to tell it all; let him select the outstanding points, which he may offer for imitation rather than praise.[508] For instance, it is worth noting in the life of

* * * * *

in the Golden Legend (*Legenda aurea*), published by William Caxton in 1470. See 'George, St' ODCC 664–5. See Erasmus' comments on St George in *Moria* CWE 27 114 and especially 118: 'If there's some legendary saint somewhat celebrated in fable (you can put George or Christopher or Barbara in that category if you need an example) you'll see that he receives far more devout attention than Peter or Paul or even Christ himself.'

506 St Laurence; see 316 above.

507 Erasmus emphasizes again that preaching is about Christ above all else; every other subject is subordinated and related to Christ, as related by 'the Gospel and the Epistle.'

508 Another crucial Erasmian tenet about preaching is that the audience should be moved to imitate the examples of Christ and the saints, not merely praise

St Nicholas[509] that he used his gold to preserve the chastity of three maidens, showing that this too is alms pleasing to God, though the mass of men thinks that alms are only what is given to monasteries or common beggars; in addition, that he did not repeat his kindness before he had seen one daughter married (and did so for people who made good use of it, it must be added); finally, that he gave secretly, expecting his reward from God alone according to the teaching of the Gospel, 'Let your left hand not know what your right hand is doing.'[510]

Let him not add miracles rashly; any that are outstanding and are reported by reputable authors, especially if they contain something for us not only to admire but to imitate as well, are to be mentioned in such a way that God is thanked at the same time and the congregation is challenged to his example. For example, St Augustine reports that a man in grave danger because of fistulas that grew out on the rear part of his body begged his friends who were present and attending him to entreat the Divinity's aid in their prayers and fell to the floor himself at the same time; then all the torment of his affliction passed away after the prayers.[511] This miracle shows how much better it is, in ills too grave to bear, to flee to God's protection rather than to the magical arts, and how powerful are the unanimous prayers of many persons. It seems once to have been the custom for a priest to relate before the congregation whatever fresh miracle had occurred; but that custom gradually died out, since many fictitious and foolish miracles were being imposed upon bishops who were more devout than learned or cautious (for simplicity is wont to believe), and there was not so much need for miracles once the teaching of the gospel was spread throughout the entire world – not to mention that both magicians and wicked demons who transform themselves into angels of light[512] produce miracles, and some things are read in what the ancients have recorded that do not square in every way with sound teaching. Witness to this are the *Dialogues of St Gregory* and the *Life of Martin* written by Sulpicius and what is reported in the *Acts of*

* * * * *

them. In Erasmus' view, epideictic (or the encomiastic *genre*) has action – the imitation of Christ – as its goal.

509 St Nicholas, monk, then bishop of Myra in Lycia; imprisoned under Diocletian, then released. Patron saint of mariners, children, Lorraine, and Russia. Stories of his life seem compiled from many sources. He is the giver of gifts on his feast day, 6 December (Santa Claus). Bari claims to have his relics. See ODS 385–6; and *Legenda aurea* 21–7.

510 Matt 6:3

511 *De civitate Dei* 22.8

512 2 Cor 11:14

St Francis, in the *Life of Catherine of Siena*, and of many others. But so long as faith flourishes in us, the church does not lack miracles and the vigour of the Spirit has not grown cold; but the miracles of the Spirit are generally kindnesses, as Christ's were. And enough about the encomiastic type.

That leaves exhortation, which is a part of the suasorial type rather than a different one,[513] except that someone who is persuading is teaching through arguments, someone who is exhorting is stimulating through the emotions.[514] Here praise, public expectation, the hope of victory, the hope of glory, the fear of disgrace, the greatness of the reward and the fear of punishment, the mention of distinguished examples, especially domestic ones, play a special part.

There are two kinds of praise: of an event and of a person.[515] We will use some great event to give encouragement by showing that it was most pious, magnificent, and so far attempted by few or by none; as for encouragement from the person, we will do this if we say that the virtue of the person we are encouraging is equal to such an act and if we recall his previous outstanding accomplishments, demanding that he set a worthy colophon on his fairest deeds.[516] So Paul, exhorting the Galatians to perseverance, said, 'You used to run well,'[517] and 'Before whose eyes Christ Jesus has been evidently set forth, crucified,'[518] again 'I bear you witness that, had you been able, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me.'[519] It is most disgraceful, however, to decline from virtue, in which a man should always surpass himself, and it is shameful to squander through dissimilar deeds a praise won by virtue: 'You once showed outstanding courage in defeating the Turks; now show the same, or nobler still, against the heretics who are plotting sure destruction against the whole Christian commonwealth.' But a general exhorting his soldiers and a preacher would handle this part in different ways, for the latter will say more solemnly, 'Be of brave and

* * * * *

513 Here Erasmus explicitly subordinates exhortation (cf Titus 1:9; 1 Tim 6:2) to the suasorial *genus*.

514 See Erasmus *De conscribendis epistolis* CWE 25 73–4 for 'the difference between encouragement and persuasion' (33): 'The concern of persuasion is to incite the will, that of encouragement to give the courage to act . . .'

515 See Quintilian 3.7.26–8, where he gives examples of 'things' to praise, eg cities, public works, temples, places, sleep and death, kinds of food.

516 *Adagia* II iii 45 *Colophonem addidit* 'He added the colophon'; see also *Adagia* III x 82 and IV vi 20.

517 Gal 5:7

518 Gal 3:1

519 Gal 4:15

trusting heart; your general Christ, who then supplied a fearless mind so that you had courage beyond human strength, will now be at hand and the more efficaciously in proportion to the magnitude of the danger.'

We expect more from those who have given some outstanding evidence of themselves through their previous deeds; for instance, 'With Christ's protection you were victorious over torture; what else does the community of the church expect except for you to scorn deceptive delights with the greatest ease?' Likewise, 'You see how much keenness it adds to mere men when they approach some deed with many great spectators; how much more should you adopt a noble spirit when, as Paul says, 'you have been made a spectacle to God and to men';[520] 'The eyes of the entire church are trained upon you; as spectators of your contest you have God together with the whole heavenly host. They favour your victory, and not only favour it but assist it with prayers, and they will grieve if you succumb.'

Sure hope of victory provides a substantial stimulus: 'Do not despise your own strength: of yourselves you have no power, but reflect that he who fights in you is all-powerful. And do not be frightened by Satan's might or arts; you are dealing with an adversary long since broken and laid low. Let the words of your leader always sound in your ears: "Take heart, because I have conquered the world."[521] Believe me, you too have conquered, if you have put all your trust in him.'

He will handle the topic of glory and disgrace in the same way: 'Heathen men have shunned no dangers; some have even devoted themselves willingly to certain death for the sake of empty glory, to hear the noise of the crowd's acclamations, or to stand in bronze or stone in the Forum, or to ride with reddened face to the Capitol in a triumphal chariot,[522] which they considered a glory nearly divine. And do we, who have been promised the acclamation of the whole heavenly city, for whom an eternal triumph is assured with our general Christ, do we abandon virtue when broken even by minor troubles? They prefer death to rousing ignominy in the eyes of a single nation; does not fear of true and eternal

* * * * *

520 1 Cor 4:9: 'We are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men.'

521 John 16:33

522 Erasmus refers to the Roman triumph, the highest honour awarded a Roman military commander. See *Appiani historia Romana* (*Appian's Roman History*) 8.9. 66; Polybius *Historiae* 16.23 (triumph of Scipio). For the 'reddened face,' see also Pliny *Naturalis historia* 33.36.111–12 and 35.45.157; and Servius *Commentarius in Virgilii Bucolica* 10.27. See Mary Beard *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, Mass 2007).

disgrace spur us towards devotion? It is a hideous disgrace to desert God's camp for Satan's side. True glory is to be told by God, "Come, blessed ones"; true disgrace is to displease God and all the saints. Notable historians report that Decius Silanus,[523] the son of Manlius Torquatus,[524] hanged himself when he was condemned by his father's judgment and was punished only by being made to withdraw from his father's sight: and do we calmly bear being removed forever from the eyes of the supreme Father?'

Glory could be subsumed under the heading of reward,[525] but we have separated it for the sake of clarity since the word 'recompense' has broader application: 'What do those who fight for the world not endure in order to win themselves some pension or magistracy or officership, which is only temporary and will soon be taken away? How much more outstanding is what our commander promises to his soldiers: a hundredfold in this world and eternal life in the next.[526] The tranquillity of a spirit at ease with itself and "a secure mind," as he says, "like a constant feast"[527] is an incomparable boon. The highest rank is to be a son of God; the highest honour is to have been enrolled into the ranks of all the saints, to be a temple of the Holy Spirit;[528] the highest riches are an heir's portion of the heavenly kingdom;[529] true and solid felicity is to contemplate the face of the supreme deity. God promises us these many, these outstanding possessions and himself together with them if we conquer the enemy of all goodness.'

It will be permissible to provide incentives likewise from the other emotions, such as from pity, from hatred, from love, envy, or rivalry.[530]

* * * * *

523 For Decius Silanus, see Cicero *De finibus* 1.7.24 and Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia* 5.8.3.

524 Valerius Maximus (c 20 BC–c AD 50) gives Manlius Torquatus; Cicero gives Titus Torquatus in *De finibus* 1.7.24.

525 The thematic core of Franciscan preaching is 'vices and virtues, punishment and glory'; see Francis of Assisi *The Later Rule* 9 in *Francis of Assisi* I 104–5: 'Moreover, I admonish and exhort those brothers that when they preach their language be well-considered and chaste for the benefit and edification of the people, announcing to them vices and virtues, punishment and glory, with brevity, because our Lord when on earth kept his word brief.' The Council of Trent repeats this, but changes 'glory' for 'rewards.' As Erasmus explains here, 'Glory could be subsumed under the heading of reward.'

526 Matt 19:29

527 Prov 15:15

528 1 Cor 6:19

529 James 2:5

530 See Quintilian 6.2.16–36.

Incentives will be supplied by pity if we represent the dangers, the misfortunes, and the innocence of those whose protection we will urge, especially those that some natural affection also commends to us, such as parents, children, wife, country, from whom, however, the spiritual affections should be more powerful: 'The heathen fear neither sword nor fire on behalf of those dearest to them; imagine that all old men are your fathers, that all coevals are your brothers, that all youths are your sons, that all these together with mother church herself are in the gravest danger and implore your aid with a single voice. How can your very hearts not be moved by their entreaties?' Incentives can also be found in hatred, if we represent the great and deplorable ruin of souls that heretics create in the church; from love and hatred alike, thus: 'It lies within your power [*virtus*] to decide which will win glory – God, to whom you owe yourselves completely, or Satan, your constant and deadly enemy. Are you not stirred by the great beneficence of the former, the great malevolence of the latter?' Envy should indeed have no part in the character of Christians, though there is a certain kind of emulation praised as a good quality, which is particularly relevant in dealing with exemplary figures, especially those who are distinguished, peerless, and celebrated, as will be discussed in their place.

If the subject demands a softening of the exhortation in order to avoid offence (for some exhort as though they were criticizing fearfulness or idleness), that inconvenience will be avoided if we disguise our exhortation as congratulation, so that we are not goading the reluctant but congratulating those who are spontaneously pursuing the honourable and thanking God, who inspired so outstanding a will in their spirits that they need no one's exhortation. The spirits of princes and wealthy men, whom we must sometimes humour for the sake of the public good, particularly need this seasoning, but without falling into adulation.

Beseeching and imploring also make a strong impression; even St Paul uses this quite often, as in Romans 12, 'I beseech you, brothers, by God's mercy, to show your bodies, a victim living, holy, and pleasing to God,'[531] etc; again in Ephesians 4, 'And so, bound in the Lord, I beseech you to walk worthily in the calling in which you have been called,'[532] etc; likewise to the Thessalonians, 'We ask and beseech you, brothers in the Lord Jesus, that, just as you have learned from us how you ought to walk and please God, so you too may walk.'[533] And he beseeches Philemon on behalf of the slave

* * * * *

531 Rom 12:1
532 Eph 4:1
533 1 Thess 4:1

Onesimus on three accounts, as Paul and as an old man and as one bound because of the gospel;[534] likewise to Timothy, 'I implore you before God and Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead, and by his coming and his kingdom, preach the word';[535] again to the same, 'I call upon you before God and Christ Jesus and his chosen angels to guard this without prejudice.'[536] This beseeching can be done by way of an epilogue, thus: 'We beseech you by the outstanding praise that you have previously won before God and men alike by your virtue, by the tribulations and dangers of your brothers who suffer unworthily, by the faith that you owe to Christ, your commander, by the love that you owe to the church, which bore you in Christ, by the eternal happiness that awaits you in your heavenly homeland for your good deeds, that in this most fair enterprise you show spirits worthy of yourselves.'

It also softens both exhortation and admonition if the exhorter mixes in his own person, thus: 'Come now, dearest brothers, we have indulged the flesh enough so far; afterwards let us raise our minds from the muck of the worldly, let us act as good and faithful soldiers, as we professed to Christ in baptism, and let us scorn the false and deceptive advantages of this life and march to that eternal triumph with all our heart.' Enough about the hortatory type.

That leaves the consolatory,[537] which one has frequent occasion to use both privately and publicly, for instance, in persecution by the ungodly, in war and siege, in pestilence and famine. The most important instruction that can be given about this type is that there are two ways of consoling: one in which we simply show either that one should not grieve at all or that one should grieve moderately, another in which we admit that the cause of grief is most just and take upon ourselves the emotion that we are trying to remove from another; for violent grief spurns all healing and hates anyone who experiences a contrary emotion. With these one must do by skill what expert physicians generally do with those who are afflicted by a certain kind of madness such that they think that they are dead and hence decline to take food or to speak with any living person, or who think that they have an incredibly long nose or the horns of an ox upon their head. The only

* * * * *

534 Philemon 9
535 2 Tim 4:1–2
536 1 Tim 5:21
537 See 2 Tim 3:16. See also Erasmus *De conscribendis epistolis* CWE 25 148–71, 171–2. Much of Erasmus' material here is repeated from his letters of consolation (148–72).

way in which you could heal them would be to pretend that you too are dead and, once you have been admitted to a conversation on this pretext, to take food in full view of the afflicted, or to pretend on entering that you are surprised by such enormous horns. The feigned assent lends credibility, and the afflicted in turn consents to take his cure.[538] This is not hypocrisy but Christian charity, which becomes all things to all people in order to win some over to Christ.[539] The prospect for health is good when wounds experience the touch of a healing hand;[540] after accomplishing this, one must first soothe the ills, then show that what torments us under the appearance of evil is not evil but good.[541]

Here the thoughtful preacher must distinguish what things make us bear troubles with greater equanimity. We bear more moderately the things that we share with all people or with most,[542] such as death, which respects no one whether humble or royal or elderly or young (to bear this intemperately is the same as being indignant that man is born a man and not an angel), likewise disease (for very few have experienced no illness), as well as those things that, though they are awful, yet cannot last forever (nothing in this life can last long, since life itself is only a moment of time),[543] but those especially that not only end but bring lasting pleasure in return for temporary grief: such is the pain of penitents and of martyrs struggling in torments or breathing their last. In fact we ought to chafe less at what we have brought upon ourselves, of our own will and by our own fault, like a fever contracted from drunkenness or the accursed sore from whoring; the thief says in the Gospel, 'We receive what our deeds deserve.'[544] Some are more annoyed at what happens undeservedly; rather, it would be appropriate to grieve the more moderately because an upright conscience contains great solace in troubles, for what happens to an innocent person is added to the tally of his piety. Sometimes necessity also reduces grief; thus David

* * * * *

538 For this method in antiquity, see Celsus *De medicina* 3.18.11: 'More often ... the patient is to be agreed with rather than opposed, and his mind slowly and imperceptibly is to be turned from the irrational talk to something better.'

539 Cf 1 Cor 9:19, 22.

540 Cf Virgil *Georgics* 3.455.

541 Seneca *De providentia* 3.1: 'Of all the propositions that I have advanced, the most difficult seems to be the one stated first, – that those things which we all shudder and tremble at are for the good of the persons themselves to whom they come.' See also Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 3.31.76.

542 See Cicero *Ad familiares* 6.6.12.

543 Erasmus *De conscribendis epistolis* CWE 25 159.

544 Luke 23:41

consoled himself when the boy he cherished was killed, 'He will never return to us; we will hurry to him.'[545] Hence tormenting oneself in useless grief over the inevitable or the irrevocable is only to double one's own misery. Now, we also endure the familiar with greater equanimity; as the comic poet says, 'Familiar troubles are not troubles.'[546] The most effective manner of relieving all difficulties is to convince ourselves, as is in fact the case, that none of this is happening by chance but is sent divinely to purge us, or to call us back to a more moral life, or to exercise our patience and enhance our crown,[547] so that in all of this we should thank God: so far should we be from grumbling at it. For the things that seem ills to our weakness are true goods, and it is ridiculous to swallow physicians' bitter pills bravely but not to be able to bear the hand of God's healing. Comparison also lessens grief. Thus Teucer in Horace: 'Oh brave men who have often endured worse / With me, now drive away your cares with wine.'[548] In so much worse ills you displayed a brave and unconquered mind; it is not appropriate for you to be unlike yourself in this misfortune. Comparison with other ills is also helpful, as in the story about the philosopher who told someone who was grieving immoderately to climb up into a high place from which there was a view of the entire city and to pile the ills from each of the houses into a single heap and to ponder whether he was willing to take his share from an equal division of that heap; if he didn't want to, he would bear his fortune more moderately.[549] Also some things we endure for serious and honourable reasons, such as protecting the Catholic faith or restoring the tranquillity of a Christian state or for our country, wives, and children. In addition, according to the words of the wise man, 'The hope of reward lessens the force of the lash.'[550] Here there will be room for Paul's statement, 'The sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the future glory that will be revealed in us.'[551] In sum, the willingness to suffer through one's

* * * * *

545 Cf 2 Sam 12:23, cited loosely by Erasmus.

546 See Plautus *Trinummus* 63: *Nota mala res optumast*. Erasmus cites this loosely: *Nota mala, mala non sunt*.

547 1 Thess 2:19; 2 Tim 4:8

548 Horace *Odes* 1.7.30–1

549 Plutarch *Consolatio ad Apollonium* 9 (*Moralia*) 106B; Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia* 7.2, ext 2B.

550 The quotation is not a proverb, but appears to be compiled from a number of sources: eg Anonymous *Expositio super Apocalypsim, prooemium: Consideratio praemii minuit vim flagelli*; Anonymous *Moralia* 56: (*et*) *spes praemii solacium fit laboris*. Augustine *Sermo* 108 PL 38 col 633: *et spes praemii aeterni*.

551 Rom 8:18

ills considerably eases the pain of our distress; as it says in the comedy, 'In a bad situation a good attitude halves the problem.'[552] Consolation is generally taken from those parts or divisions of the genre of consolation or from certain parts of other genres.[553]

That leaves the ἐπιτιμητικός [censorius][554] or, to use a milder term, the νουθετικός [monitory]; for it suits the gentleness of the gospel that the preacher should admonish rather than rebuke, though sometimes the enormity of the crimes demands that a preacher do what Isaiah commands him to do, 'Shout, do not cease; like a trumpet raise your voice and announce their crimes to the people and their sins to the house of Jacob.'[555] St Paul gives Timothy the same instruction to accuse and rebuke,[556] but he is mindful of evangelical gentleness and adds oil to his wine, saying, 'Beseech' and 'With every gentleness.'[557] Again, writing to the same man, he shows that 'divinely inspired Scripture is useful for teaching, for accusing, for correcting,

* * * * *

552 Plautus *Pseudolus* 452: *bonus animus in mala re dimidiumst mali*.

553 Quintilian briefly mentions 'consolatory speeches' (*consolationes*); these would form part of the *genus deliberativum* and display their own proper parts and style; see 11.3.153. See also Lausberg §§226 and 238, 1175.3a and 1192; and Cicero *De oratore* 3.5.210: 'Different styles are required by deliberative speeches, panegyrics, lawsuits and lectures, and for consolation, protest, discussion and historical narrative, respectively'; and *Tusculan Disputations* 3.34.82 and 3.30.75–6. See especially George W. McClure *Sorrow and Consolation in Italian Humanism* (Princeton 1991) 3–17. On the idea of *genus* and its parts (*partes*), see eg Cicero *De inventione* 1.22.32.

554 ἐπιτιμητικός 'censorius, critical': Hermogenes uses this word in *On Types of Style* (Περὶ ἰδεῶν λόγου) 1.7.23: 'For a harsh passage is bitter and very critical (ὁ γὰρ τραχὺς λόγος πικρός τε καὶ ἄγαν ἐπιτιμητικός ἐστιν).' The word is also used by Lucian *Juppiter tragoedus* 23: 'fault-finding.' Again Erasmus' source for this is 2 Tim 3:16 ('All Scripture is inspired and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness') and 2 Tim 4:2 ('Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine'). Erasmus uses this word as an adjectival equivalent of ἐλεγμός (πρὸς ἐλεγμόν; ἔλεγξις 'refuting,' 'reproving'). Erasmus notes that 'rebuke' is in general too sharp and prefers instead the milder term νουθετικός 'monitory.' These Greek words are translated variously into English depending on the Bible translation; see eg NRSV: 2 Tim 4:2: 'Convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching' ἔλεγξον, ἐπιτίμησον, παρακάλεσον . . .). See *De conscribendis epistolis* CWE 25 39–44 ('Correction'), for Erasmus' instruction on correcting and encouraging youth.

555 Isa 58:1

556 2 Tim 3:16, 4:2

557 'Beseech,' 'With . . . gentleness': 2 Tim 4:2

and for training in righteousness,'[558] thus indicating what should be the aim of ecclesiastical rebuke and how it should be tempered and mitigated if you want the aim, 'that the man of God prepared for every good work be morally unblemished.'[559] And it is not enough to condemn vices, but we must prefix some teaching in order to show convincingly that what is being rebuked is wicked. At the same time, one must show how crimes can be corrected; then those who have been called back from error must be shown how much more right and even pleasant it is for a man dedicated to God to walk through the path of virtue all the way to perfection. Here indeed some commit a grave error who, before an uninformed congregation, create an air of holiness around themselves by censuring human vices freely, not to say licentiously, babbling out before the general congregation all the hideous crimes that they have learned in secret confessions, and then think that they have done an outstanding job of execrating vices if they repeatedly exclaim, in a madman's voice, 'Where will you go, wretches? Into the devil's arse, to the thirty thousand wicked demons, into eternal fire,' scarcely considering that there are some kinds of crimes that cannot be usefully criticized before the people but should rather be left alone.[560]

The sort that I mean are the bizarre forms of pleasure, the magical arts, and other things in which excessively precise condemnation becomes instruction. For human nature is curious; even the mere mention of certain kinds of misconduct constitutes infection, and so how foolish it is, in an assembly that contains boys and maidens and men and even women who are for the most part simple and unfamiliar with horrors of this sort, to describe the thirty ways in which a husband commits a capital crime with his wife, what it means to sodomize, to masturbate, *irrumare*,[561] *crissare*,[562] and countless other forms of abominable filth, all the way up to intercourse with brute animals. How much better it is to have consideration for the simplicity and innocence of people who would never suspect that such dreadful enormities are found among Christians. There is a more appropriate place

* * * * *

558 2 Tim 3:16

559 2 Tim 3:17

560 Erasmus alludes here to the principle of *apte dicere* 'speaking appropriately to the occasion.'

561 Latin *irrumare* designates a sexual practice distinguished from fellatio; see James L. Butrica's review of Richard W. Hopper ed *The Priapus Poems* (Urbana and Chicago 1999) in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2000.02.23 (http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2000/2000-02-23.html). See OLD *irrum*.

562 Latin *crissare*, a verb applied to the movements of a woman's lumbar region during sexual intercourse. (Translator's note) See OLD *criso*.

for condemning these, such as in confidential confessions or private conversations; but if Scripture offers an occasion for talking about them, there is no need to depict them as though the intention were to teach them rather than to execrate them. I have heard some men who seemed even to court praise from the fact that they had so precise a knowledge of those mysteries. It is enough to lay out the crime in general terms, but not without horror and abomination; for example, if one had to treat the passage of the Letter to the Romans where Paul expounds how God betrayed the philosophers of the Greeks to a base instinct,[563] or why Sodom was overthrown,[564] it would be enough to say before the congregation, 'There was an abominable crime, which I could scarcely dare to name, how man has intercourse with man contrary to nature, woman with woman. The wickedness of the heathen had once reached this point of turpitude, by which I hope Christian folk are untouched, although there is otherwise an abundance of lusts.'

Likewise, someone who is denouncing the wickedness of magic need not describe how divination is done, by nail or by sieve,[565] or what witches grind, mix, or say when they rouse storms, or the words they use to summon wicked spirits or the souls of the dead. It will be enough to say, with abomination, that fortune-telling, spells, belly talking,[566] necromancy, pyromancy, and other types of witchcraft, because they are exercised with the aid of demons, involve at least a tacit, if not explicit, conspiracy with them and an abjuration of the supreme Trinity.[567] The same should be done in the

* * * * *

563 Rom 1:26–8

564 Genesis 19

565 *Adagia* I x 6 *Cribro divinare* 'To divine by a sieve': 'To divine by a sieve, is to detect a thing by skilful inference, or to make foolish guesses about things concealed. Lucian in his *False Prophet*: "Divining what had happened, as they say, by a sieve."' The standard title of Lucian's work is *Alexander* or *Alexander (Pseudomantis)*. See CWE 32 371 n8.

566 Erasmus' mention of 'belly talkers' is likely prompted by his reference to the 'sieve' just above. Alexander of Abonoteichus in Asia Minor, the false prophet, was known to create much the same effect at his temple with a fraudulent device fastened with cranes' windpipes that produced the voice of a god talking through the mouth of a serpent. For belly talkers in the ancient world, see Sarah Iles Johnston 'Divination and Prophecy' in *Religions of the Ancient World: A Guide* ed Sarah Iles Johnston (Cambridge, Mass 2004) 384–5.

567 It is evident that Erasmus, like many other well-educated persons of his time, believed there were those who entered into conspiracies with demons and abjured their baptismal oath. For background on the meaning, intellectual and legal foundations, and the impact of the Reformation on the phenomenon of witchcraft in the early modern era, see Brian P. Levack *The Witch-Hunt in Early*

case of less serious crimes, which should be condemned in such a way that they are avoided, not taught.

It will be right to denounce those who dupe the customer in merchandise, likewise those who taint flour and wine and beer; he will show that they are not only thieves but poisoners. It is a kind of theft to sell as purple what is not purple or to sell glass as a jewel; it is a kind of poisoning to sell wine that has been treated in such a way that it brings illness or death to those who drink it. It is not appropriate to explain the ways in which they taint it, in order to avoid what happened in Brabant to a woman who sold beer. A preacher had spoken against those who dupe the public by adding soap to beer that is already going flat in order to make it seem fresh, then shake it so that the suds disguise the flatness. She went home and said that she had never heard a more beneficial sermon: 'Before,' she said, 'I lost a lot of money by not being able to foist stale beer on anyone.' Another had admitted in confession that he had tainted the beer of a neighbouring beer seller (for not only potters are envious of other potters)[568] by mixing soap with the iron filings that are generally put in the hollow of the pipe in order to clarify the water drawn from the river; as a result, the whole batch turned out badly, and so the poor man was reduced to poverty. It would have been better not to mention this in the sermon. It would have been enough to say that this crime was much more worthy of hanging than theft: one can exercise vigilance against a thief, but not against this.

It is appropriate to execrate cosmetics in women, but it is not appropriate to teach the congregation all the means by which they smooth the furrows of their wrinkles, produce whiteness and redness on their cheeks, add brightness and dye their hair, or the powder that they use to colour their eyes. Now, some make a song and dance over things that are silly and more to be mocked than criticized, missing the crimes that are truly horrible. When I was a youth, all the pulpits were abuzz with protests against broad footwear, against the long snouts added to shoes, against young women's veils being whitened and stiffened with a liquid made, I think, from alum and flour or darkened with soot. I heard a certain pastor threatening his congregation just before Easter Sunday that he would not offer the body

* * * * *

Modern Europe 2nd ed (New York 1995); and the essays by Erik H.C. Midelfort *Witchcraft, Madness, Society, and Religion in Early Modern Germany: A Ship of Fools* (Farnham 2013); and Michael M. Tavuzzi *Prierias: The Life and Works of Silvestro Mazzolini Da Prierio, 1456-1527* (Durham, NC 1997).

568 See *Adagia* I ii 25 and n25 *Figulus figulo invidet, faber fabro* 'Potter envies potter and smith envies smith.'

of the Lord to people who wore wide shoes unless they gave them up. Another used to harangue against feathers, another against the large pleats with which foolish dressmakers had begun to burden women's unhappy loins. Someone had thought up a sharp and clever phrase: he compared them to organ pipes, adding 'The devil will blow those pipes.' Nor was there any shortage of people protesting against the trains that ordinary women, stimulated by the example of the mighty, had begun to drag behind, shouting that demons rode upon them. Sometimes a congregation must be admonished that their clothes should be worthy of Christians, notable neither for their appearance nor for their cost, just as St Peter urges matrons to regard as true elegance a mind adorned with modesty, chastity, and other virtues rather than artfully plaited hair or gold or jewels or otherwise precious robes.[569] It is right to advise them to cover in public whatever can attract the eyes of those whom it is wrong to want to please; it is enough if they are beautiful at home to their own husbands. Furthermore, though there is much extravagance in clothing and much foolishness as well, yet some decorate boys and girls with the same adornment that they use themselves. They weigh girls down with hairbands and fillets, with a double blouse of which the outer has a tail pulled back from behind to the belt with a pin, they add boots and built-up shoes: but what is more useless to good health than burdening tender little bodies in a way that keeps them from growing? So they burden boys' heads too with a broad-brimmed double cap that could be a nuisance even for a man's head, and they make two mistakes, by impeding infants' good health and by teaching them luxury and pride prematurely. These things and many like them must indeed be said in admonition, but lovingly and calmly, and very often a sober and moderate admonition accomplishes more than a furious outcry. One should instead inform them that in certain cities of Germany women walk erect and nearly bent backwards, and allow men to bare their head and bend their knee to them, while they themselves show no more respect as though they were speaking to the lowliest of their handmaidens. What is uglier than this example? Scripture suggests something quite different,[570] and so does nature herself, which has given authority to men, reserve and modesty to women; but I have entered further into this field than I had intended.

Some fawn in their rebuking, especially upon elegant ladies who hear with silent pleasure about their excessively long trains, borne from behind by someone of good birth (undertaking so glorious an office would be wrong

* * * * *

569 1 Pet 3:3–5
570 Cf Eph 5:21–33.

otherwise), the broad sleeves likewise stretching all the way to the ground and useful only for burdening the hands, elegant meals, well-dressed domestics and painted ladies-in-waiting, banquets drawn out till late in the night, sleeping till late in the day, much time and effort consumed in their toilette. At last she goes forth, a great troop thronging round her. Then preachers paint a picture, not without a hint of naughtiness, of roving eyes, affected gait, a playful movement of the feet, and other silliness of this sort. To this they add some merry jests more likely to rouse smiles than penitence, so that these heroines can go home and tell them over dinner to get a laugh, for people of this sort are as fond of being depicted by the tongue as they are glad to be depicted in a portrait. In addition, some rebuke vices as though they envied them, such as when they depict how softly and pleasurably the rich live, and others rebuke as though they hate the people, not the vices.

But Christian warning should be utterly unlike the Pharisees' arrogance. That will happen if we say in our rebuke that we are more truly grieved than angered, if we are mitigating something, the way that Peter minimizes the wickedness of the Jews who had crucified the Lord by saying that they had sinned through ignorance and casts part of the blame upon the times themselves,[571] saying, 'Turn away from that corrupt generation,'[572] just as Paul too, when speaking before the Areopagites, ascribes the madness of those who worshipped idols as gods to the times of ignorance, which God had hitherto overlooked.[573] In this way some offences should be played down on grounds of age or sex or the greatness of the temptation.

But a man will be less savage in rebuking the vices of others if he reflects that he is subject, if not to the same vices, at least to comparable or perhaps worse ones, or (if he is not) that he is a man and will perhaps commit worse acts if a similar temptation occurs. Finally, if the subject demands indignation, let him be like a father towards a son, not like an enemy towards an enemy. Let the person who is being upbraided feel that the anger arises not from hate but from love, and that the object is not vengeance but correction. Let the sinner be cast down by his criticism in such a way that he can soon be raised up; for this is what the Apostle calls ἐπανόρθωσις [setting right].[574] This was the method that Peter used to criticize Simon. He shows that money that is offered for spiritual gifts is dangerous, 'because,'

* * * * *

571 Acts 3:17–26
572 Acts 2:40
573 Acts 17:30
574 2 Tim 3:16

he says, 'you were under the impression that God's gift was acquired by money.' Next he criticizes, 'You have no part nor share in that speech'; but then he raises him up: 'And so be penitent.'[575]

Hardly anyone endures calmly the upbraiding by someone whose life is openly corrupt or notorious, but it is more intolerable to be rebuked by someone who forgives in himself what he castigates in others. The preacher will mitigate this resentment if he includes himself in this way, as we have shown in discussing exhortation: 'We are all human; no one does not slip sometimes, though different vices damage some people more than others. I am myself a sinner admonishing sinners. We have gone astray together; let us be corrected together, so that those who now have a common grief may be reconciled and all have a common rejoicing.'

The rebuke that comes from old men or public authorities is less offensive, since they seem to be doing what they are doing under the compulsion of the very office that they are holding. Excessively harsh criticism of princes or magistrates or bishops before a congregation is seditious;[576] often it is less harmful to tolerate the vices of such men. It is more useful to place an image of a good prince[577] before their eyes and to advise each of them to behold himself in this mirror. But if rebuke seems useful, let it be general: this should be one's constant practice, so far as possible, so that neither a particular person nor a particular social class seems to be an object of attack. This is the advice I wanted to give about the censorial genre, which pertains to the duty of the preacher; now let us return to what we left off earlier.

* * * * *

575 Acts 8:20–3. Peter reproaches Simon Magus for attempting to purchase the power of the Holy Spirit.

576 See Rom 13:1–7. Erasmus calls attention to the common practice where preachers would rail against other clergy, bishops, and magistrates. By the late 1530s, this licence had run its course as ecclesiastical authorities worked to curb the practice. A parallel to Erasmus' statement is Ignatius Loyola's 'Rules for Thinking with the Church' (Rule 10), composed perhaps in 1538: 'We ought to be more prompt to find good and praise as well the Constitutions and recommendations as the ways of our Superiors. Because, although some are not or have not been such, to speak against them, whether preaching in public or discoursing before the common people, would rather give rise to fault-finding and scandal than profit; and so the people would be incensed against their Superiors, whether temporal or spiritual. So that, as it does harm to speak evil to the common people of Superiors in their absence, so it can make profit to speak of the evil ways to the persons themselves who can remedy them.' See Terence O'Reilly 'Erasmus, Ignatius Loyola, and Orthodoxy' *The Journal of Theological Studies* n s 30 (1979) 115–27.

577 See Erasmus *Institutio principis christiani* CWE 27 199–288.

The discussion of status, or formulations, which the Greeks call στάσεις [status],[578] is both prolix and perplexed among both Greek and Latin writers alike;[579] we shall now touch briefly only upon what seems likely to be useful for our preacher. A status is the essential point of a case or question, to which the speaker refers everything and which the listener has particularly in view.[580] For example, in court cases one keeps especially in view whether the alleged activity occurred, what its nature is, and what it is.[581] The first status is called conjectural or negatory,[582] the second of character or relating to justice, the third of end or definitional. In the first, the truth is sought through conjectures; in the second, because there is agreement about what was done, one asks whether it was done legally; in the third, because there is agreement about both of these, the name of the deed is sought through definition. Sometimes, however, a charge is also eliminated by changing its name. For example, if Milo, accused of murder, had denied that he killed Clodius, it would have been a conjectural status;[583] now, because he admits this, there remains another conjectural argument, as to who ambushed the other, which includes a status of character, for it is admitted that it is right to kill someone who attacks by ambush. Thus, Orestes does not deny that he killed his mother but relies upon a status of character in affirming that it was right to kill her.[584] Likewise, if an accused were to admit that he took secular money from a sacred place, he would acknowledge the crime of theft, but he would not acknowledge that of sacrilege, saying that sacrilege occurs only when a holy object is taken from a holy place;[585] or if someone who had sex with another man's wife in a brothel were to admit illicit intercourse but deny adultery;[586] or if it was a case of whether a woman who administered a potion intended to create love or hate should be held on a charge of poisoning or only of injuring.[587] This sip from the writings of the rhetoricians is enough to show what a status is.

* * * * *

578 Literally, 'standings,' 'positions,' which is also the literal meaning of Latin *status*. (Translator's note)
579 See Quintilian 3.6.1–103; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.11.18; Cicero *De inventione* 1.8.10.
580 See nn152 and 158 above.
581 Quintilian 3.6.9 and 80; Cicero *Orator* 14.45; and Lausberg §§79–138
582 Quintilian 3.6.5
583 Erasmus is commenting on Quintilian's analysis (3.6.12) of Cicero's *Pro Milone*.
584 Quintilian 3.11.4–6, 12; and Cicero *De inventione* 1.13.18–1.14.19
585 Quintilian 5.10.39
586 Quintilian 7.3.10 and 7.8.2
587 Quintilian 7.3.10

Someone might ask what this has to do with a herald of the gospel. First, it is useful, because after considering the theme on which he is to speak, he relates everything towards the essential point as though towards a target and does not stray from the subject in pointless digressions or wander in his speech like a madman, uttering words either irrelevant or even contradictory. And although status are employed principally in court cases, nevertheless everyone who speaks to the people in order to persuade, exhort, or console sets before himself some definite goal that he wishes to accomplish; at any rate it stands in the place of the status.

Finally, these also crop up frequently in the themes of sermons, more frequently in private conversations or consultations, such as if one were wondering where on earth is the paradise in which God placed Adam and where is purgatory, in the centre of the earth or somewhere else? Likewise whether Judas' intention in selling the Lord for so little money was with the hope that he believed that he would slip out of their hands as he had done on several other occasions, for it is not likely that he did this in order to be killed: otherwise he would not have given the denarii back nor would he have strangled himself with a noose.[588] It is a conjectural status, for example, if one were to ask Satan's purpose in so often tempting the Lord;[589] likewise if a preacher, to urge his congregation to placate God's anger, were to say that a plague or other calamity had been sent by an angry God because of men's wicked life; likewise when and by what signs it was understood that God wanted the rituals of the Jews to be abolished altogether, so that it is now a crime to keep them; in addition the intention of Lot's daughters in enticing their father to incest;[590] likewise whether the souls of the dead really appear or all this happens by the fakery of demons; also when one inquires the reason for the Law, such as why God in the Law forbade plowing with an ox and an ass[591] or wearing clothing made from wool and linen combined[592] (Augustine calls this aetiology).[593]

* * * * *

588 Matt 27:3–5
589 See Matt 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–13.
590 Gen 19:30–38
591 Deut 22:10
592 Deut 22:11
593 On 'aetiology' (*aetiologia*), see Augustine *De Genesi ad literam* (*On Genesis: The Unfinished Literal Commentary on Genesis*) WSA I-13 116 5 (2): 'Four ways of expounding the law have been laid down by some scripture commentators . . . they are the way of history, the way of allegory, the way of analogy, the way of aetiology.' And: 'Aetiology, when the causes of the things that have

There is nowhere that a status of quality does not arise:[594] when one doubts whether it is right for clerics or monks to wage war, whether Christians, like Jews, are permitted divorce, whether one may leave a bride in a lawful but unconsummated marriage against her will because one has professed the monastic life, whether it is fair for her to remain unwed until her groom has professed, even if he defers his profession for some years by changing monastery or order.

Furthermore, there are countless cases in which one inquires through definition:[595] whether usury has been committed or not, likewise whether someone who, in a papal letter of appointment, has corrected a character badly formed by a notary has committed the crime of forgery, and whether those who have opposed a prince who is oppressing the liberty of his people through tyranny have committed the crime of *lèse majesté*?[596]

In addition, when Scripture seems to be in conflict with Scripture, the status is from opposing laws, such as when Moses' tablets say, 'Honour your parents,'[597] and Christ says, 'He who does not hate his father and mother is not worthy of me.'[598]

When there is ambiguity or obscurity in the letter, the status is from the written word and its meaning, such as when one asks what Paul meant when he said, 'I wish to become anathema for the sake of my brothers according to the flesh,'[599] and what Francis meant by forbidding his brothers to accept money either through themselves or through others.[600] There are many passages in canonical Scripture that produce ambiguity either from

* * * * *

been said and done are presented.' See also Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* 1 q 1 a 10 response to argument 2 and Isidore *Etymologiae* 2.21. See also book 3 999.

594 On 'quality' (*qualitas*), see Quintilian 3.6.1–103, 7.4.1–4, 7.7.5. See also Lausberg §§89b, 123–30. See 499 n160 above.

595 See Quintilian 3.6.4–5, 49, 7.5.1; Cicero *De partitione oratoria* 12.41; Lausberg §§104–22, 138.2, 149, 166–70, 221, 232, 250–1, 408.2.

596 On '*lèse majesté*,' see Quintilian 7.3.35: 'Sometimes we have an unquestioned Definition on which both parties agree, as in Cicero's "Majesty resides in the dignity of the power and name of the Roman people." The Question is, however, whether this majesty has been diminished . . .' See Cicero *Partitiones oratoriae* 105.

597 Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16

598 Luke 14:26

599 Rom 9:3; see Lausberg §§210, 218, 408.5a; 1069.4.

600 See *The Earlier Rule of Saint Francis* (*Regula non bullata* [c 1221]) in *Francis of Assisi* 69–70; and *The Later Rule* (*Sancti Francisci regula anni 1223*) 102.

the ambiguity of a word or from the arrangement of the words or from a variant reading; but how the contradiction of Scripture is to be resolved or how its ambiguity is to be explained will be stated in its proper place.[601]

Finally, when it comes into question whether it is more useful to allow priests marriage by public authority than to tolerate concubines and other indecencies, and whether it is a lesser ill for an unchaste priest to keep a concubine or to marry contrary to papal law,[602] and whether it is more useful for the Christian religion to have even an unjust peace with the Turks or to fight in a just war.[603]

And nothing prevents the occurrence of various status in the same theme if it has several parts.[604] For example, in the theme that I reported earlier, when we propose that it is contrary to nature for a mother not to use her own milk to nurture what she has borne, it is a status of quality. On the other hand, when we propose that the woman who only gives birth and casts the child away is not a mother, it is a definitional status. When we

* * * * *

601 See book 3 passim where Erasmus gives abundant instructions for resolving problems presented by the ambiguities of Scripture.

602 On the question whether priests might be permitted to marry by public authority, see the abundant references to Erasmus' views on this subject in CWE 39 484–5 n6; CWE 83 xxxiv–xxxvii, xlii–xliii, xliv–xlvi, xlviii–xlix, 112n, 114–15, 119 and n, 120–1, 123–5, 125n, 126–8, 130n, 131–5, 137–9, 142–3, 146n; CWE 71 117 (*Manifesta mendacia*); and CWE 84 319–33 and 319 n1236. For a likely basis of Erasmus' rhetorical argument here, see Cicero *De inventione* 1.9.12: 'There is a controversy about the nature or character of an act when there is both agreement as to what has been done and certainty as to how the act should be defined, but there is a question nevertheless about how important it is or of what kind, or in general about its quality, eg was it just or unjust, profitable or unprofitable? It includes all such cases in which there is a question about the quality of an act without any controversy about definition.' Cicero then goes on to take issue with Hermagoras' confusion over the species and the genus of an argument.

603 See Erasmus' discussion of this question (and pessimistic comments about a war against the Turks) in his commentary on Ps 28, *De bello Turcico* CWE 64 201–66, whose extended title is, appropriately, *A Most Useful Discussion Concerning Proposals for War against the Turks, Including an Exposition of Psalm 28*. See also CWE 63 270 and 270 n500 and *Querela pacis* CWE 27 289–322. In this paragraph Erasmus continues his exposition of the idea of *status*, here seeming to address that of the comparative nature of 'the useful' (*utilitas*), ie what is more useful and less useful in specific circumstances and decisions to be made. See Quintilian 3.8.1–48, 7.4.12; Cicero *De inventione* 1.9.12 and 1.11.15–1.12.17; and Lausberg §§181, 182, 233, 234, 235.

604 See Quintilian 3.6.91, 7.10.

propose that the character of a wicked nurse passes to the infant through her milk, it will be a conjectural status, for it can be doubted whether this is true, and it can be denied by someone who disagrees.

After this brief taste, then, we must proceed to the discovery of parts or propositions, of which we began to speak above.[605] Quintilian thinks that this is the most difficult of all, and indeed no small part of its difficulty is situated in this, except that an advocate before a judge speaks at greater risk than a preacher before a congregation; in addition, as was said before, the preacher does not always need to express how many and what parts must be used. Moreover, it is rare for a preacher to be occupied with the judicial type, but yet it is not much different from this sort when he speaks from his pulpit against Jews, heretics or schismatics, or even pagans. Here the adversaries sometimes provide propositions for the defence. For example, if someone were to propose as follows: 'The enemies of the name "Christian" make three particular charges against us, among many others: infanticide, witchcraft, and rebellion against princes and magistrates,' there will be three status in these three things. When he says, 'Nothing is more foreign to Christian morals than infanticide,' the status will be negatory. On the other hand, in replying to the second objection 'to disobey princes who give wicked commands is not rebellion but loyalty,' the status will concern quality or definition. If he says to the third, 'It is not witchcraft but a sacrament when we use words efficacious through Christ's faith to consecrate water, bread, and wine and to forgive sins, to crush demons; witchcraft is accomplished with the aid of demons,' the status will be definitional. Or if someone, to reply to the calumnies that some make, were to divide thus: 'Our adversaries accuse us on three points in particular, first because we assign too little to faith, too much to works, then because we reduce excessively the force of original sin, finally because we equate papal decrees with God's commands,' here the parts are supplied by the opponents rather than devised by the speaker, as in Cicero's famous division in his *Pro Murena*,[606] which is praised without exception: 'I understand, jurors, that the parts of the accusation were three in all, and that one of them concerned criticism of his life, the second a competition for rank, the third charges of corruption.' Nothing is more lucid than this partition, nor is anything superfluous, since it embraces the entire case.

* * * * *

605 See 510–84 above. See Quintilian 4.4.1–4.5.11. For 'discovery' (*inventio*) in general, see Lausberg §§261–442.

606 Cicero *Pro Murena* 5.11, cited by Quintilian, who calls it 'admirable' (*optime*); see Quintilian 4.5.12; also see n402 above.

But if the adversaries' charge is confused, the defender will win praise for his talent if he arranges the heap of accusations into discrete columns, with the parts so distributed that nothing pertinent to the matter is omitted and nothing is redundant. Moreover, anything that is put separately when it is included in one of the parts is redundant, unless he gives a reason why he has separated things that belong together.

But when an adversary has arranged his speech into parts, it is not always appropriate to cover them in the same order, especially in a division that reaches its peak by steps through supposition, such as if someone who has slain the son of a tyrant whose father, unable to bear the grief, has killed himself, were to divide thus: 'If I had only desired and conceived in my mind such an outstanding deed, would I not be thought to deserve a reward? If I had only attacked and had climbed the tyrant's citadel with this intention, even unsuccessfully, do you think that my reward should be denied? If I had slain even a single attendant, would I not seem to deserve a reward? If I had killed only the son, crueler than his tyrant father and the heir apparent of his tyranny, would you deny my reward? Now, besides all this, I have killed even the tyrant himself more cruelly than if I had slaughtered him with my own hand. But suppose that this outcome had not followed; the man who has stripped a tyrant of all his henchmen and made him powerless against the liberty of the state – has he not removed tyranny? If I had driven the tyrant into exile, would the reward due a tyannicide be denied? As an exile he could wage war against the city; now I have handed over to you defenceless an old man stripped of the son in whom lay all his hope and of all supporters, so that anyone can kill him safely. If I had not foreseen the outcome, would I therefore seem unworthy of reward because luck favoured my courage? In fact, I did foresee it, and I spared the tyrant by design so that he might perish all the more cruelly, tormented by the death of his son.'[607] This order of the parts would not suit someone speaking in opposition, and he would not even have to use the same parts; but we shall soon speak of this sort of division. In other cases it will be most convenient to reply in the same order in which the adversary laid them out, unless some particular case suggests a different one. Aeschines praised King Philip of Macedon on three accounts, that he had an attractive body, that he was eloquent, that he could handle heavy drinking.[608] Demosthenes mocked these parts by saying that the first

* * * * *

607 See Lucian *Tyrannicida*; Quintilian 7.3.7; and Erasmus *Tyrannicida* ASD I-1 506–13 / CWE 29 71–123.

608 See Plutarch *Demosthenes* 853. Chomarat observes that Erasmus transposes the second and third element; ASD V-4 347 508–12n.

compliment belonged to women, not to a king, the second to sophists, the third to sponges, among which the thirstiest is regarded as the best.

Therefore, we must now consider how a division is to be invented in themes where it is not provided from elsewhere or where it is not appropriate to use the same parts, but either the difficulty or the variety of the material still requires a division. The most important instruction that can be given in this matter is that propositions are best invented from the careful consideration of the parts and circumstances of the whole case. From such a full consideration there will be no great difficulty in perceiving which of these are the important ones upon which the whole argument depends. When these have been determined, it remains to discern what is the most convenient order of the parts. Moreover, it is most convenient when an earlier part offers and lays a kind of step, so to speak, for the one that follows, of course preparing the audience's minds the more easily to believe what follows, for example, if one were to divide thus when speaking against heretics: 'First, I shall raise the curtain on their lives, how false and wicked their character; second, I shall refute their erroneous dogmas; third, their schismatic dogmas; fourth, the heretical ones.'[609] Among these the last part is the foremost point of the argument, which the other parts serve in order, for an error of understanding is more credible in those whose life is unclean; and the wickedness of schism is more credible in those who have many foul delusions, and schism in general is either linked with heresy or gives rise to it. Thus murder is more credible in the case of a highly impetuous man who has beaten many, adultery in the case of a licentious man, because the latter deeds are like steps to the former. This is the plan that St Jerome uses in mocking Jovinian's foolish and outrageous diction, to make it more likely that he is similarly mad in his dogmas.[610] It would be quite prejudicial for Vigilantius[611] in his dogmas if the first part of the division should expose a tavern keeper's occupation in a priest, then the shamelessness of a man who was frightened during an earthquake and leapt naked from his wife into a church still bearing some marks of his lust on him, or for the

* * * * *

609 It is useful to note how accurate Erasmus is in describing the rhetorical method most writers used during the Reformation to depict the teachings of their adversaries. One often begins by vilifying an opponent's character.

610 Jerome *Adversus Jovinianum* (*Against Jovinianus*) NPNF 2nd series 6 346–416; PL 23 211a–212a. For Erasmus' cautious reception of Jerome's ideas on the subject of virginity and marriage, see Hilmar M. Pabel 'Reading Jerome in the Renaissance: Erasmus' Reception of the *Adversus Jovinianum*' *Renaissance Quarterly* 55/2 2002 470–97.

611 Jerome *Contra Vigiliantium* NPNF 2nd series 6 417–23; PL 23 (1883) 339A.

Manichaeans if the abominable secrets of their life are revealed,[612] as also for the Marcionites,[613] as St Augustine did for the former, Irenaeus for the latter, though without a partition in both cases. On the other hand, if someone had decided to praise the monastic life, the very nature of the theme almost provides the division, since the essence of that institution consists of three things in particular: continence, poverty, and obedience.[614] The whole sermon will be taken up with magnifying these. But if this partition does not seem to embrace all the benefits of that life, another will be found from the parts of the suasorial type of which I spoke above, that no other kind of life is more in accordance with evangelical devotion or safer or pleasanter. There is nothing in the benefits of that way of life that is not embraced by these three parts, for many other things besides three vows are contained in the first proposition.[615] It will be difficult to bring the treatment of security under obedience, especially since security is promised to man, not to God. The treatment of the pleasant will never be capable of being related to it; and yet if these could somehow be related to those three (since security has many parts, as pleasantness does likewise), it will be more convenient for them to be separated lest the profusion of particular propositions create confusion. I call 'particular' those that are proper to individual argumentations.

For the reader must be alerted that this word has a threefold meaning among those who have written about skill in speaking, for 'proposition'[616]

* * * * *

612 Augustine *De natura boni* (*Concerning the Nature of Good, Against the Manichaeans*) NPNF 1st series 4 351–65. The Manichaeans, a sect to which St Augustine once belonged, believed in a universe controlled by two supreme contrary powers, one good and the other evil. See also Augustine *Confessions* 5.3.6. See 'Mani (or Manes) and Manichaeism' ODCC 1027–8.

613 Irenaeus *Adversus Haereses* 1.13.5–7. Erasmus edited this work, which was published at Basel by Froben in 1526. See his dedicatory letter to Bernhard von Cles (Basel, 27 August 1526), Ep 1738.

614 These three things are fundamental to monastic life and could form a clear, logical division for the speaker whose task is to extol religious life. Members of the monastery of the Augustinian Canons Regular took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. See Schoeck (2) 89–109 and 114 n9. Members of the Benedictine order took vows of stability, conversion (*conversatio morum*), and obedience.

615 Just below Erasmus gives various meanings of the word *propositio* 'proposition'; here, however, he refers to the division or partition of a sermon that would consider the monastic life under the three vows ('... the very nature of the theme almost provides the division, since the essence of that institution consists of three things in particular: continence, poverty, and obedience').

616 See Quintilian 3.9.1–5.

is sometimes used to mean something at the start that embraces the whole issue of the argument and serves as a title, such as when Ovid begins thus: 'Whoever in this nation knows not the art of loving, / Let him read me, and – my poem read – love learnedly.'[617] Some call this 'exposition.'[618] Likewise, a preacher: 'I bring to you the most pure life and most brave death of the blessed Agnes.'[619] This can be single. Sometimes it indicates the particular parts[620] and columns, so to speak, of the argument, which are promised in the division; if a single proposition is put in this, now there is no division. Sometimes proposition is used to mean the beginning of any argumentation; if repeated after the argumentation, this is called the conclusion or recapitulation,[621] for whoever begins to make an argument states what he means to prove, and when his proof is finished he repeats and plants in his audience's minds what he has proved. If the subject proposed is debatable, it is called a 'question.'[622] An example will be, 'It is best for early youth to be imbued at once with salutary instruction.'[623] This is the proposition; the proof follows: 'It is best because what is impressed upon the untrained minds of children clings most tenaciously, just as a clay pot long retains the aroma with which it was first imbued.'[624] In addition, 'Not only does what is honourable cling more tenaciously, but it is also more easily imbibed by minds that are empty and not yet occupied with wicked opinions and vices, just as it is easier to write what we want on an empty tablet. Besides, it is more difficult to unteach than to teach.'[625] At this point the proposition that has just been proved is repeated, followed by the conclusion: 'And so they are wise who take care right from infancy itself to have their children trained with liberal teaching and the precepts of living rightly.'

* * * * *

617 Ovid *Ars amatoria* 1.1–2

618 On 'exposition' (or 'statement of facts'), see Quintilian 4.4.1; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.17; Lausberg §§289, 346.

619 St Agnes, Roman saint, virgin, and martyr, who died in the persecutions of late third century. Her feast is celebrated on 21 January. See ODCC 29; and Jacopo da Varagine *Legenda aurea* I 101–4.

620 See Quintilian 4.4.1.

621 On 'conclusion,' see Quintilian 6.1.1 and 7, 3.9.2, 9.2.103; Cicero *De inventione* 1.98; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 2.30.47.

622 On *quaestio*, see Quintilian 3.5.1–15; Cicero *De inventione* 1.17.

623 This again is one of Erasmus' fundamental principles on the education of youth; see *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 297–346; see too Quintilian 1.1.1.

624 Cf Horace *Epistles* 1.2.69–70; Erasmus *De conscribendis epistolis* CWE 25 34 n41; *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 402 n152.

625 Quintilian 2.3.2; Erasmus *Antibarbari* CWE 23 35.

Therefore, anyone who has considered carefully the individual propositions of the argument that will occur in arguing, as well as those to which his adversary or the silent thoughts of his audience seem likely to object, will more easily select from these the general ones that embrace the whole case. He will be helped in this by a knowledge of status and their kin, charge, refutation, motive, affirmation, confirmation, and judgment.[626] These will be most readily apparent in an example that everyone uses,[627] though there is remarkable disagreement about the words and the deeds alike.[628] 'I accuse Orestes of parricide because he killed his mother' is the charge. The refutation: 'He killed her, but rightly.' To which is immediately added the motive: 'For she had killed Agamemnon, Orestes' father, her own husband, and not content with this she took in an adulterer in place of her victim.' To this the accuser opposes an affirmation: 'But a mother ought not therefore to be killed by her son without a hearing; she could have been punished by the law.' To the affirmation the accused opposes a confirmation: 'Her attitude towards her children and her whole family was such that there was no one by whom she could be more fittingly killed than by her own children; and Orestes did not do this without authority, but advised by Apollo's oracle.'[629] From these offences arises a judgment: 'Since Clytemnestra killed Agamemnon and brought in an adulterer and was so disposed towards her family, was Orestes right to kill his mother when Apollo advised it?' This rhetorical instruction aims only at making the speaker give careful consideration to what he is doing for himself, what for his adversary or dissenter, and the judgment is only the final status of the case; when it has been found, all that is left is for the judge to pronounce sentence.

Moreover, the dissenter's silent thought does during a sermon what the adversary does in court. For instance, anyone who undertakes to praise virginity[630] ought to anticipate in his mind what might occur to someone who disagrees or is uncertain, say, 'Virginity is contrary to nature,' 'Virginity does not help the state,' 'Virginity is exposed to the many dangers of incontinence, so that it is safer to have a husband.' Likewise, when he preaches

* * * * *

626 See Cicero *De inventione* 1.10.13–14, 1.13.18–19; cf Quintilian 3.6.7, 3.11.1–28.

627 See Cicero *De inventione* 1.13.18–19, and Quintilian 3.11.4–12.

628 Cf Quintilian 3.11.4–20.

629 See Euripides *Electra* 1266–7; Aeschylus *Libation Bearers* 269–305.

630 These topics were often addressed by the Fathers of the church. See eg Gregory of Nyssa *On Virginity* NPNF 2nd series 5 343–71; Ambrose *De virginibus* PL 16 (1845) 187–232, *Concerning Virgins* NPNF 2nd series 10 361–87; see too Ignatius Loyola *Exercita spiritualia* (Rules for Thinking with the Church) (Rules 4, 5).

the praises of fasting,[631] he ought to consider that many in front of him will say that the brain is exhausted by fasts, that mental vigour is weakened, that men are rendered disagreeable and irritable, that physical strength is attentuated, that countless diseases arise from eating fish, finally that it is useless for the very purpose that it was intended to aid: for it is intended to make the mind quicker and readier for spiritual exercises, but fasting weighs down the mind more with a single meal than if the same amount were consumed in two meals. Against these propositions others must be devised.

A knowledge of the parts that we showed in the suasorial, encomiastic, hortatory, and consolatory kind will also be helpful in deciding upon a division. A knowledge of the loci of which we shall soon speak will also be helpful, as also of predicable words and predicates,[632] since it is through them that whatever pertains to the nature and quality of each thing is made evident. The circumstances[633] of things and of persons will also be helpful. Finally, whatever is useful for argumentation can be applied somehow to partition. Moreover, skill in many arts, in law, philosophy, and theology, will be helpful. For instance, someone who is speaking against usury will divide thus: 'First, I shall say what usury is; second, what contracts smack of usury; third, I shall deplore the fact that usury, which even the laws of the heathen ban, is common among Christians; fourth, I shall lay bare the fraudulent dealings that are worse than any usury.' Someone experienced in both kinds of law[634] or in philosophy and theology will invent these propositions more easily and will treat them better, for Aristotle too has written that it is unnatural for money to bear money,[635] and

* * * * *

631 Ibidem (Rule 7)

632 Erasmus refers to scholastic terms from Aristotle's *Topics* and other works on logic. 'Predicable words' allow one to define objects according to the five classes of genus, species, differentia, property, and accident. The 'predicaments' (categories or predicates) allow one to analyze the truth of probable syllogisms by speaking of existents according to the ten categories of substance, quantity, quality, relation, in time, in place, posture (or possession), state, action, and passion. These logical tools were transmitted to the West through Boethius' translation of Porphyry's *Isagoge*. See Porphyry the Phoenician *Isagoge* trans Edward W. Warren (Toronto 1975).

633 See Quintilian 5.10.104; and see 614–96 below.

634 *iuris utriusque*: ie canon and civil law.

635 Aristotle *Politics* 1.10.4–5 (1258b): 'The most hated sort [of wealth getting], and with the greatest reason, is usury, which makes a gain out of money itself, and not from the natural object of it ... of all modes of getting wealth this is the most unnatural.' For further words against usury see below, and *De puritate*

the laws of the ancients approved of usury within fixed limits, forbade it beyond them.[636] The Jews were permitted to lend to outsiders for usury, though never to their own people,[637] but Christian laws totally condemn usury.[638] In addition, secular and sacred laws alike define which contracts are legitimate, which not, but illicit contracts cannot be compared properly with usury without a knowledge of law and theology. Likewise, if someone addressing a congregation about marriage were to divide thus, 'First, I shall state the ways in which marriage is contracted legitimately; second, the cases in which a marriage not properly contracted should be sundered, in which not; third, the reasons for which even a legitimately contracted marriage can be sundered; fourth, what is necessary so that a husband can live chastely, peacefully, and pleasantly with a wife,' he will hardly be able to discuss this without a knowledge of the skills that I have mentioned.[639] This is about all the instruction that can be given in regard to the invention of propositions;[640] the rest belongs to talent and training.

To the above it should be added that there are primary and secondary propositions, of which the one is the principal, the other is assumed by supposition[641] and helps the other outside the case, as if in the place of a precedent. Cicero defends Milo in such a way that his principal proposition is 'He killed him rightly because he slew one who was attacking in an ambush,' the secondary is 'Even if he had killed a most pestilential citizen in any manner, his courage deserved honour, not punishment.' Since it would not be safe to rely upon this proposition, one returns to the other: 'He did not

* * * * *

tabernaculi CWE 65 256 and *Adagia* I ix 12 *A mortuo tributum exigere* 'To exact tribute from the dead.' See also Cicero *De officiis* 2.25.89.

636 See Justinian *Digest* XXII, tit. I; *The Digest of Justinian* ed Theodor Mommsen with Paul Krueger, trans and ed Alan Watson (Philadelphia 1985); Benjamin Nelson *The Idea of Usury, From Tribal Brotherhood to Universal Otherhood* (Chicago [1969] 109); Eric Kerridge *Usury, Interest, and the Reformation* (Aldershot and Burlington, Vt c 2002).

637 Exod 22:25; Deut 23:19–20

638 For 'Christian laws,' see Pope Leo I *Epistolae, 'Ut nobis gratulationem' ad episcopos per Campaniam, Picenum, Tusciam*, 10 October 443 (DS 280–1); Lateran II (1139), Canon 13, 'De simonia et usura' (DS 716); cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* II IIae q 78 a 1–4 *De usura*.

639 Cf *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 203–438.

640 See Quintilian 3.9–11.

641 Quintilian 5.10.95–9: 'Fiction here means, first, putting forward something which, if true, would either destroy the point raised or strengthen it; and secondly, making the subject of the inquiry appear parallel to our fiction' (5.10.96).

kill through ambush, but someone who ambushed.'[642] But the other is not merely pointless, for a judge becomes better disposed towards the principal defence if he sees that another can also be established by some argument.

It is an example of the same class when one arrives at the essence of a case by supposition through a single step or several steps. For instance, a preacher urging obedience in a people that is plotting rebellion against their prince would argue as follows: 'Even though a wicked or even a pagan prince had been your lot, nevertheless Scripture condemns rebellion.'[643] This is the step: 'Now, since we have a Christian and even a devout and merciful prince, consider yourselves how unworthy it is for Christians not to obey him.' On the other hand, the preacher will be able to use the proposition in the following way against tyrannical princes: 'If you were heathens ruling heathens, the law of nature and the edicts of the heathens both teach that princes should exercise their power not according to their own pleasure but for the good of the state, that otherwise they will be tyrants, not princes, and the laws of the pagans promise a reward to the tyrannicide. Now, since you are Christians ruling Christians, and a common Lord, a common religion has made them your fellow slaves rather than your slaves, and a common heritage has rendered them your brothers, you have all the more reason to refrain from any semblance of tyranny.' Likewise against disobedient children:[644] 'If idolatrous and wicked parents had been your lot, nevertheless you would offend God if you did not heed them on account of the very fact that they bore and raised you. Now, there is all the more reason for you to obey Christian parents who have not only borne you but also trained you to godliness, so that they seem with good reason to have borne you twice.'

This is but a single step; it will be possible for there to be more. For instance, if a debate arose whether Pope Julius ought to wage war against the Venetians because of some petty possessions they had seized, the division will be capable of having these steps:[645] 'First, I could demonstrate with powerful authorities and no mean arguments that no cause makes it right for

* * * * *

642 See Cicero *Pro Milone* 10.27–11.31; Quintilian 3.5.10, 3.11.15–17; *De copia* CWE 24 598.

643 Cf Rom 13:1–7.

644 Cf Eph 6:1; Col 3:20.

645 See *De copia* CWE 24 598–9 and 598 n30. Chomarat (ASD V-4 353 668n) notes that in 1509 Erasmus, at the request of Cardinal Raphael [Riario] authored, two declamations, one for, the other against, Julius' war against the Venetians; both are lost, but the sense of these can be found in the *De copia* CWE 24 598–600, and especially n30 for other references in Erasmus to these arguments. See Pastor 6 232–58; Christine Shaw *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass c 1993).

Christian priests to wage war, since their calling is to vanquish vices and to battle with spiritual arms[646] against airy spirits.' This would be the first step. The second takes it up: 'Suppose that we grant that it is right to wage war; it is not permissible to do so for the sake of secular possessions, which it is not appropriate for men endowed with ecclesiastical rank to own, inasmuch as they have received a loftier territory, and it is not in accordance with the practice of the Christian religion.' The third takes up this one: 'Suppose that we grant that it is appropriate for other priests; it is not appropriate for the Roman pontiff, who, as he is the nearer to Christ whose role he performs,[647] should be all the purer from those things that Christ scorned and taught should be scorned.'[648] The fourth step supports this one: 'Though it befit other popes, it does not befit Julius, who is already aged and near death,[649] merciful by nature and so far peaceful.' From here he will leap to the fifth: 'But I do not urge this for the moment. Let us grant that it is befitting: it is not seemly that the mercy of the highest priest, whose arms are prayers and tears, should confound the Christian world with confusion, slaughter, and blood for the sake of some little earthly wealth; for this trivial business could be conducted through arbiters.' From here he will pass to the sixth step: 'Though it be permissible, though it be seemly, it is hardly safe; for there is a danger that, while trying to claim one or two little possessions

* * * * *

646 Eph 6:11–18

647 'Nearer to Christ whose role he performs' (*vicinior est Christo cuius vices gerit*); it is unusual for Erasmus to make such claims for the papacy. Chomarat states that it is done here only as a supplementary argument against the pope's going to war; ASD V-4 353 677–8n. As Erasmus states below, 'this example to be proposed only for the sake of demonstration' (595). However, Erasmus' ecclesiology envisions one office of the pope as mending schisms and bringing about peace among bishops in disagreement. In this respect the pope does enjoy a certain preeminence, though Erasmus does not elaborate on it but suggests it in these arguments by indirection. For Erasmus' ecclesiology, see: Brian Gogan 'The Ecclesiology of Erasmus of Rotterdam: A Genetic Account' *The Heythrop Journal* 21.1 (1980) 393–411; Manfred Hoffmann 'Erasmus on Church and Ministry' ERSY 6 (1986) 1–30; Harry J. McSorley 'Erasmus and the Primacy of the Roman Pontiff: Between Conciliarism and Papalism' *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 65 (1974) 37–54; and C. Augustijn 'The Ecclesiology of Erasmus' in *Scrinium* ii 135–55.

648 Matt 26:52

649 Julius II (born 1443; ruled 1503–13), Giuliano della Rovere, dedicated much of his pontificate to war; he commanded the papal armies to recover towns in the Papal States that had fallen from papal control. On 14 May 1509, the papal army in league with the French and imperial forces defeated the Venetians at Agnadello.

by arms, he might not only lose those that he has but also shake the whole church with a dangerous schism, for varied is the outcome of war, and evil is sown from evil. Moreover, the peace of the church ought to be dearer to its highest shepherd than the possession of a few paltry towns.' The seventh step will be: 'Even if none of this is the case, nevertheless it is hardly fair that he should, for quite trivial reasons, stir up Christian kings against a people that have so often given such excellent service not only to the Roman see but also to the whole Christian community; had they not driven back the Turk with their own courage, and were they not fending them off even now, perhaps the pope would not have even Rome as his own.' From these steps he will come to the principal proposition: 'I could say this even if Julius had a just cause for attacking the Venetians. Now I shall demonstrate that the affair is of such a kind that Julius should thank the Venetians for rebuilding, enlarging, and enriching the towns, which had declined through papal neglect, rather than harass them in war.' Moreover, this proposition embraces within itself many particular ones, as all those above do as well, for example, 'The Venetians did not seize the property of others by force of arms but came into property that was abandoned as if unoccupied; then, what was seized passed by right of demurrer into another's control; finally, the silence of so many centuries is merely the assent of the popes, since the affair was conducted neither by force nor in secret; with that follows an argument from necessity, that the Venetians recovered those places into their jurisdiction because they could not protect their own boundaries if they had neighbours who were abandoned and without government. It seems a mark of outstanding impudence to reclaim as one's own what has been restored at the considerable expense of another, when one had not considered it as one's own when it was neglected.' I should like this example to be proposed only for the sake of demonstration, not in order to make pronouncements about the right of priests; for one could use similar steps to argue on behalf of Julius.

Moreover, it seldom happens that there is an opportunity in a sermon for propositions that are drawn from the individual circumstances of a person, except perhaps in praises of the saints or in exhorting a congregation to obey a new prelate or a new prince; for they are bare propositions[650] that are not complicated by particular circumstances, for example, if one were to urge harmony in general by demonstrating how much good arises hence for the state, how much evil from discord. There are some as well that

* * * * *

650 On 'bare propositions,' see Quintilian 4.4.8.

are derived from the circumstances of a certain person, for example, if one were to dissuade Socrates or Plato from marriage not merely because they are philosophers but because of the kind of philosophers they are. There are middle ones that are neither merely simple nor drawn from the circumstances of an individual person, for instance, if one were to dissuade clerics from meddling in the business of war or priests from becoming involved in marriages. An example of the first kind will be if someone argues against all war, of the second if someone dissuades Julius from war against the Venetians, of the third if someone dissuades bishops and priests from war. The preacher will have occasion to use the first and last sort often, the second rather seldom, as I have said.

This will be clearer from a theme that seems once to have been bandied about in the schools of declamation (Seneca affirms that it is fictitious, though others disagree):[651] Antony promises Cicero his life if he should burn the *Philippics*,[652] which he had written against him. The first and principal proposition can be drawn from conjectures[653] if the person who is arguing against it assumes that Antony's action is a clever ruse to destroy Cicero completely by first taking away the imperishable glory that those speeches would win for him should they survive. This will be rendered probable through arguments, which the particular circumstances of either person will suggest: 'Will the ficklest of men, a drunk and cruel by nature, keep his faith in these circumstances, when he has never kept faith whether with Octavia[654] or with the state or with any god or man? And will a man who has been so savage towards the innocent and towards his allies spare an enemy whom he so despises and by whom he has been so bitterly provoked?' A second will support this one: 'Granted that Antony be willing to forgive – which

* * * * *

651 Quintilian 3.8.46. See Seneca (the Elder) *Suasoriae* 6 and 7. Cf ASD V-4 355 727n.

652 *Philippics*, arguably Cicero's greatest speeches, recalling Demosthenes' orations against Philip II of Macedon, were composed in 44–43 BC to urge the Senate to declare Mark Antony a public enemy.

653 Erasmus gives here an example of a conjectural (or inferential) question. See Cicero *De inventione* 2.5.16: 'Every inference [*conjectura*], then, is based on arguments from the cause of the action, from the character of the person involved, and from the nature of the act' (2.5.16). See also Quintilian 3.6.29–104, 7.2.1–7 and 27, 7.4.24.

654 Octavia, sister of Caesar Augustus, married Mark Antony in 40 BC after the death of her first husband, Marcellus. The marriage, a political move to consolidate the Pact of Brundisium, effectively ended when Mark Antony became involved with Cleopatra. Divorced from Mark Antony in 32 BC, Octavia raised their children along with those from her marriage with Marcellus, and she brought up Mark Antony's children from his first marriage with Fulvia.

is not likely – Fulvia, who has him totally in her power, will not allow it.' The third can be general: 'Granted that there is no danger, nevertheless one should be quicker to lose one's life than one's everlasting reputation, for this is a man's truer life through which he becomes immortal. For the life of the body is all too brief, but honourable repute shines brighter and brighter with time; for Demosthenes, celebrated throughout the world, is now more preeminently alive than when he dwelt in Athens unknown to many peoples.' This will be supported by three, of which two will be drawn from the particular circumstance of the person, the third from those of the subject. The first will be drawn from the person thus: 'Even though it must be granted to others to consider life more precious than repute, Cicero is not free to do so, for in so many outstanding books he has demonstrated and urged most eloquently that the life of the body is not life but rather a race towards death, that the immortality of renown is a man's true life, thanks to which he survives himself even beyond the pyre.' The second thus: 'If you were a young man, to redeem a life of sixty years by the loss of repute would still be an unfair exchange. As it is, how little life can remain to a man of sixty-four years; consider now that your life is over and that all that remains is a very brief, and very wretched, portion of life.' The third will be taken from the subject, thus: 'If he offered the condition that you should destroy the other monuments of your genius, it should in no way be accepted. As it is, he commands the burning of the *Philippics*,[655] in which there shines an eloquence perfect in all its parts and in which you have surpassed yourself by a long chalk, while in your other works you have surpassed everyone else.' To these another general one will be joined: 'It is harsh to owe your life to someone to whom you are unwilling to owe it. Many others bear witness to this, including Scipio,[656] Petreius,[657] and Cato of Utica,[658] who considered it more tolerable

* * * * *

655 See especially *Philippics* 2.

656 For Scipio (= Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio), see Lucan *Bellum civile* 2.473, 6.311. Scipio commanded the centre of Pompey's army at Pharsala in 48 BC; he was beaten at Thapsus in Africa in 46, where he committed suicide. OCD 678 'Metellus (7) Pius, Quintus Caecilius.' In *De providentia* 1.2.10, Seneca speaks of Petreius' and Cato's death after Thapsus: 'For Cato it were as ignoble to beg death from any man as to beg life.'

657 Petreius (= Marcus Petreius), propraetor in northern Italy, governor of Hispania Ulterior in 55, adherent of Pompey. He committed suicide in 46 after Thapsus. See OCD 806.

658 Cato of Utica (= Marcus Porcius, 95–46 BC), great-grandson of Cato the Censor; he allied himself with the Pompeians against Caesar after Pompey's death and

to commit suicide than to owe their life to Julius Caesar.' Another will follow this one, drawn from the particular circumstances of either person: 'Will the excellent Cicero, who has always hated tyrants, be able to owe his life to Antony, the cruelest and foulest of all men? Will he be able to thank him as a suppliant and to call him his saviour? Will he be able to to credit his survival to a most accursed bandit and oppressor of public liberty, so that that man in his cups could mock what he wished to appear as a gift because he did not snatch it away by a criminal act, since, under the slightest provocation, he could snatch away what he had given? But how much nobler was the character of Julius Caesar, to whom Cato was unwilling to owe *his* safety.' By establishing these steps one will return to the strongest proposition of all, that Antony was not concerned to save Cicero but to destroy him totally, more cruelly than if he slew him by the sword.

I employ secular examples so that the preacher can devise his own from them by imitation, for example, if in an exhortation to innocence he were to take these propositions, of which the first is general and simple: 'If there were no reward for virtue, no punishment for crimes, nevertheless virtue is so much in accordance with human nature and vice so contrary to it that the former should be embraced, the latter shunned simply because we are human.'[659] And again, another general one similar to this one: 'So great is the beauty of virtue, so great the ugliness of vice that the former should be pursued even for its own sake, the latter detested for its own sake, for virtue is abundantly its own great reward.[660] For no one would endure to have the shape of a human, the mind of a brute, even though he experienced no ill from it, for no other reason than that he is human; but how much more ridiculous is it to have a human spirit but the form of a brute animal.'[661] The third will be drawn in this way, though with the addition of a special

* * * * *

administered Utica. His suicide is recorded in Plutarch *Cato the Younger* (72), as are Caesar's words: 'O Cato, I begrudge you your death, for you begrudged me the sparing of your life.' See 'Cato the Younger' in *Classical Tradition* 179–81.

659 Erasmus reiterates one of the principal subjects for preaching, 'vices and virtues, punishment and reward.' See especially book 4 1032 n63, 1041 n135.

660 See Seneca *De beata vita* 9.4: 'Do you ask what it is that I seek in virtue? Only herself. For she offers nothing better – she herself is her own reward.'

661 Erasmus' original Latin was *animum humanum habere, formam bruti animantis.* Chomarat has emended this to *formam humanam habere, animum bruti animantis* 'to have the shape of a human, the mind of a brute'; ASD V-4 356 and 357 781n. (Translator's note)

circumstance:[662] 'A Christian, being akin to the angels, has something above the human; it is the more detestable that he should have a mind malformed by the figure of the devil.' The fourth thus: 'If there were no hell, if no laws threatening punishment, if wrongdoing escaped the eyes both of men and of God, and (I add), if there were no life after this one, nevertheless so great is the peace of a mind guilty of no evil, so great the anguish and torture of a sullied conscience, that those who live innocently will be happy, those who live wickedly will be wretched.' The final one will be: 'As it is, such rewards await the pious, such punishments the impious that, if nothing awaited those who live piously in this world but grievous and constant torments, and nothing awaited those who live impiously but utter pleasantness and prosperity, it would still be a great profit to embrace piety, a great loss to follow vices. What then should we do when we are convinced by the most sound authority of Christ that those things that have not ascended into the heart of man,[663] that is, the things which surpass human understanding,[664] await those who live piously even in this life, along with that most blessed immortality with Christ and all the saints after this life?' I know that rhetoricians impart many other instructions regarding propositions, penetrating and not unpleasant to know, but we are training a preacher here, not a pleader of cases or a sophist or a declaimer.

When the propositions have been devised, then, there remains the argumentation or proofs;[665] the Greeks call them πίστεις [assurances] because they induce belief in something doubtful. Concerning these one should say first, in general, what Aristotle indicates, that there are three things that win a speaker credibility, φρόνησις, ἀρετή, καὶ εὔνοια,[666] that is, practical wisdom, virtue, and good will. Without the first, the speaker might through ignorance urge wickedness rather than righteousness. Next, it is not enough to understand what is useful unless he is a good man who does not want knowingly

* * * * *

662 See Quintilian 5.10.104: 'This type of argument may reasonably be described as drawn from circumstances, there being no other word to express the Greek περίστασις, or from those things which are peculiar to any given case.'

663 Cf 1 Cor 2:9.

664 Cf Phil 4:7.

665 See Quintilian 5.10.8. See also Cicero *De inventione* 1.34–77.

666 Aristotle *Rhetoric* 2.1.5–7 (1378a): 'Three things are necessary for the orator to win credibility; for apart from demonstrations the things through which we believe are thoughtfulness, virtue, and goodwill . . .' See also Cicero *Topica* 20.78: 'In the case of a man, it is the opinion of his virtue that is most important.'

to deceive his hearer. Now, even with right judgment, even with honesty, it will happen that without good will someone, in order to do harm, may intentionally and deliberately urge a dangerous course. When the devil urged the eating of the forbidden fruit,[667] he was not unaware what was best, but those two things, virtue and good will, were absent. Moreover, it can happen that a good man may knowingly urge something harmful as something useful, say for an enemy of his country or for a tyrant oppressing the state, but this is irrelevant to the churchman, who should be endowed with such virtue that he bears good will towards both friends and enemies. Therefore, the preacher will take care first that none of these be lacking, then that the congregation understand that he is endowed with such wisdom that he is not deceived in his judgment, next that he is too good a man to wish knowingly to deceive anyone, finally that his charity is such that he wishes to profit even his enemies.[668]

Having said this, I return to the proofs taught by the rhetoricians. The function of these is twofold: to strengthen our own position and to refute the contrary one.[669] It is agreed that in the division as a whole proofs are divided into ἀτέχνοι [arguments without art], which you could call nontechnical, and ἐντέχνοι [arguments with art], that is, technical.[670] The former sort is comprised of precedents, rumours, the results of torture, documents, an oath, testimonies. Precedents are those pronounced by other judges in a similar or comparable or the same case, including decisions of a council and

* * * * *

667 Cf Gen 3:1–5. Again, nowhere in Scripture is the serpent of Genesis identified as the devil; Erasmus is repeating a commonly held assumption.

668 'Endowed with such wisdom that he is not deceived by judgment' (= thoughtfulness); 'too good a man to wish knowingly to deceive anyone' (= virtue); 'his charity is such that he wishes to profit even his enemies' (= good will or benevolence).

669 Cicero *De inventione* 1.42.78; *De partitione oratoria* 9.33; *De oratore* 2.19.80; Quintilian 5.13.53; Aristotle *Rhetoric* 3.17. See also Lausberg §§348–430.

670 See Cicero *De inventione* 1.42.78. 'Arguments without art' are those not worked out by the speaker, eg arguments based on hard evidence; 'arguments with art' (technical arguments) are those devised by the speaker. See especially Quintilian 5.1.1–2, 5.2; see also Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1.1.14 (1355b); Cicero *Topica* 4.24, 73. Erasmus follows Quintilian (5.1.1), who notes 'that the division laid down by Aristotle has met with almost universal approval. It is to the effect that there are some proofs adopted by the orator that lie outside the art of speaking, and others that he himself deduces or, if I may use the term, begets out of his case.' Cicero speaks of this method for 'searching every nook and corner where suspicion could lurk' (*omnes latebras suspicionum peragrare dicendo*) in *Pro Caelio* 22.53–4.

decrees of princes.[671] Rumours are a sort of public testimony to a general consensus.[672] Tortures are those things by which a confession of the truth is extorted through physical punishment.[673] Documents are like written testimonies that are contained in contracts, written agreements, and wills.[674] An oath is similar in nature to tortures in that it compels by fear while they compel by pain,[675] for at one time it was common to add an execration to an oath: 'I curse myself and my family if I knowingly commit any deceit.'[676] Even today, when one adds, 'So help me God,' it contains an unspoken execration, as if you were saying, 'May God not help me if I am lying.' Oracles, which are divine testimonies, fall into the category of testimonies.[677] Though these are separate from technique, nevertheless they are strengthened or refuted or weakened by technique, but we need to handle these devices in a way that brings some usefulness to the preacher.

Precedents[678] are strengthened by the authority of those from whom they have proceeded; they are refuted by the manifest guilt of those men or by the corruption of the court or by the dissimilarity of the case. For example, Moses' opinion that a false witness should receive capital punishment[679] is a precedent regarding the punishment deserved by a judge who has pronounced a corrupt decision. Likewise, his opinion that an adulterous woman should be assaulted with stones,[680] when he gave no such decree concerning

* * * * *

671 See Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1.1.14 (1355b).
672 Quintilian 5.3
673 Quintilian 5.4.1
674 Quintilian 5.5
675 Quintilian 5.6
676 Cf Pliny *Panegyricus* 64.3: 'Clearly and explicitly he pronounced the words whereby he consigned his life and household to the wrath of heaven if knowingly he swore false'; cf Erasmus *Lingua* CWE 29 317 n109, 331–2 ('I doom myself and my whole house if I knowingly have deceived').
677 On 'oracles,' see Cicero *Topica* 20.77: 'The testimony of the gods is covered thoroughly enough by the following: first, utterances, for oracles get their name from the fact that they contain an utterance [*oratio*] of the gods . . .'
678 On 'precedents' (*praeiudicia*), see Quintilian 5.2.2.
679 See Exod 20:16 and Deut 19:19 ('They shall render to him as he meant to do to his brother . . .'). Chomarat correctly notes that in Scripture false testimony is punished by the law of the talon, not by death ASD V-4 359 836n. Also Prov 19:9: 'A false witness will not go unpunished, and the liar will perish.'
680 Deut 22:22 states explicitly that a man engaging in adultery is subject to the death penalty. See Lev 20:10: 'If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbour, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death.' See Ezek 16:40 and John 8:3 for stoning an adulterous woman.

a man, is a precedent that a wife and husband do not have equal rights in the matter of divorce.[681] Since it is not right to speak against his person, something needs to be devised here to urge that the nature of the case is different, either because Moses' law permitted certain things to the harshness of husbands, which the New Law does not concede,[682] or else because the nature of the times is different, and something that is established in the laws of the heathen should not automatically be valid among Christians. Likewise, whenever something has been decreed in the laws of princes that conflicts with papal or divine law, it is right for the Caesars' laws to give way. In addition, there are certain ordinances and customs of certain cities that can be criticized legitimately, for usury or simony is not to be left uncondemned because it has become a widespread custom and is not subject to legal punishment.

So rumours are a sort of mass precedent. If they work on our behalf, we will say that a story hardly ever arises from nothing, or that a false one that has somehow arisen vanishes at once, and that the voice of the people is the voice of God, and therefore Paul does not want anyone to be received to the office of bishop unless commended in honourable repute not only by Christians but also by heathens.[683] With similar foresight they did not admit any into the rank of clerics who were encumbered by an unfavourable repute; Caesar even divorced his wife not because of any wrongdoing but because she was tainted with the suspicion of adultery.[684] If rumours should work against us, we will say that it is hardly safe to trust popular report since it often lies, though it sometimes spreads the truth; it arises first from the tale of some chatterbox or enemy, the credulity of ordinary people makes it grow. It is clear that a good many perfectly innocent people have been ruined in this way; therefore, what is said in people's conversation should not be immediately embraced as right. Excellence has always pleased few; examples

* * * * *

681 The Israelites gave the husband much greater latitude in matters of divorce; see Deut 24:1–4. The Romans, according to Aulus Gellius, imposed no penalties on any adulterous husbands; wives, on the other hand, could be killed with impunity. See Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 10.23.5 for Marcus Cato's oration *De dote*: '"If you should take your wife in adultery, you may with impunity put her to death without a trial; but if you should commit adultery or indecency, she must not presume to lay a finger on you, nor does the law allow it."'

682 Cf Matt 19:8: 'Moses by reason of the hardness of your heart permitted you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.'

683 1 Tim 3:7

684 See Plutarch *Caesar* 10.6; and Erasmus *Apophthegmata* (C. Julius Caesar III) CWE 73 401–10.

are everywhere to hand: what but popular rumours drove so many thousands of martyrs to their death; indeed what drove Christ upon the cross but a popular rumour that started first from a few Pharisees.[685] Even from the age of Jerome right up to the present, monks have had a very bad reputation,[686] though their way of life is pious if they keep what they profess; on the other hand, the common man admires the life of courtiers, though there is nothing more wretched.[687] You could scarcely find an outstanding man whose merits are matched by his popular reputation. Under the heading of rumours are included proverbs and popular sayings, which will be discussed in their place.[688]

I do not see what torture has to do with a preacher, unless he happens to be handling the confession of demons who have confessed unwillingly upon beholding the truth[689] or else the tortures of the conscience, which extort the soul's secrets through the face and through body language, if not by word, in accordance with the saying, 'The conscience is a thousand witnesses.'[690] An opportunity will perhaps occur to speak against torture, since some judges are too ready to apply judicial torture; for example, in Acts the tribune Lysias, being ignorant of Hebrew, commanded a centurion to extort the truth through pain when he could not determine the truth because of a rioting mob, but he ought first to have discussed with him in private why the Jews were raging so against him.[691] Even in our own time examples frequently come to light both of men who, though innocent, have confessed falsely and died on account of their inability to endure pain and of men who, though guilty, have persisted in denying the truth and have lived on account of their natural hardness or their experience of torments, while the innocent have been charged and executed.[692] One form of torture is prison, into which men are shoved in certain countries for any trivial charge or suspicion and rot there, whether from the

* * * * *

685 See eg Matt 27:20–3.

686 See eg Jerome Ep 38.5 (to Marcella) CSEL 54 292–3, NPNF 2nd series 6 47–9. For Erasmus' scholarship on Jerome, see CWE 61.

687 Further comments by Erasmus on courtiers appear in *Moria* CWE 27 136–7.

688 See book 3 605, 864, 866, 914.

689 See eg Mark 5:6–7; Matt 8:29.

690 *Adagia* I x 91 *Conscientia mille testes* 'Conscience is a thousand witnesses'; see Quintilian 5.11.41.

691 Acts 22:22–9

692 Chomarat notes, most fittingly, that these lines 'should assure Erasmus a place in the history of the struggle against the use of judicial torture' ASD V-4 361 878–82n.

judges' shame or negligence or to someone's profit. The greatest wrong in this respect is done in wartime or in the banditry that passes itself off as warfare: whoever owns anything is taken prisoner and is not released without the payment of a large ransom. And these are called military settlements.

Still less relevant to the preacher are the rhetoricians' instructions concerning written documents, unless we twist these to refer to our obligations under the most binding of commandments to render what we owe to God, what to our neighbour. There are various forms of evasion regarding documents written by the hand of man, no form of evasion regarding those that nature and the Holy Spirit has written in our hearts.

A preacher must often speak about oaths, though not in the same way as advocates, such as whenever he condemns a rash oath or perjury or when he says, to exaggerate, that every sin involves perjury, for in baptism we all abjure Satan together with all his pomp and desires. The prince swears to the people, the people in turn to the prince; each commits perjury if he does not fulfil what he has sworn. Every judge who gives a corrupt judgment is also a perjurer in this way, and when he begins, 'We, sitting in the seat of justice and having God alone before our eyes,' he commits perjury if he pronounces an unfair judgment. The same applies to those who undo their vows. Finally, it would be fitting that the sincerity of Christians be such that it should be simple to speak in regard to swearing.[693]

I have already spoken in part about written documents. It is permissible to be evasive regarding the documents of certain authors, such as the precepts of philosophers, however authoritative, the approved Doctors of the church, though with prefatory words of respect and reverence. Regarding the oracles of canonical Scripture there is no evasion; yet there can be disagreement about its true meaning, for heretics use misunderstandings of the testimonies of canonical Scripture to confirm their dogmas and are not afraid of impugning the authority of certain books. It is right to have reservations regarding the responses of angels or spirits or demons that are not recorded in canonical writings. Sometimes they are invented or falsified, sometimes they are related differently than they occurred, sometimes impostor spirits transform themselves into angels of light[694] in order to lure the credulous and simple into error; yet there can be an occasion for their correct use, for instance, if someone were to defend Athanasius, Jerome, or Chrysostom against men's slanders.

* * * * *

693 Cf Matt 5:34.
694 2 Cor 11:14

For even today there are some who try to diminish Chrysostom's authority on the grounds that he was accused of sexual misconduct,[695] that he was said to have favoured the Origenists,[696] that his character was harsh and wicked,[697] that he got along badly with the devout ruler Theodosius, that he was driven from his office by Theophilus,[698] a learned man, and by Epiphanius,[699] a holy one, that on the emperor's order he was sent into a harsh and distant exile.[700] Regarding the accusation, one can have reservations on the grounds that these rumours were spread deliberately by his enemies, and none of them could be proved about him.[701] Whatever rhetoricians suggest against rumours or against witnesses applies here.[702] Regarding the prior judgment of the emperor, it can be suggested that, though he himself was considered orthodox, he had a wife who was named Eudoxa[703] but was in

* * * * *

695 See Chrysostom Ep 125 PG 52 (1862) 683: 'They also charge me of cohabitating with a woman.'

696 See Jerome Ep 113 CSEL 55.2 393–4, NPNF 2nd series 6 214.

697 See *De vita S. Joannis Chrysostomi nunc primum adornata* PG 47 (1863) 197–8. See *Sozomen* 8.9 405. See J.N.D. Kelly *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom, Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (Ithaca 1995) 126–7.

698 Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria (384 or 5–412), an Origenist who later turned against Origenists; he clashed with John Chrysostom, who gave refuge to Origenists who fled Alexandria. Theophilus' maneuverings brought about Chrysostom's deposition at the Council of 'The Oak' near Chalcedon (403). See *Sozomen* 8 398–418, especially 406–18. Jerome translated into Latin many of Theophilus' letters (see 87, 89, 90, 92, 96, 98, 100, 113) and a fragment of his complaint addressed to Rome against Chrysostom. See also Socrates Scholasticus *Historia ecclesiastica* (*Ecclesiastical History*) 6 NPNF 2nd series 6 137–52.

699 Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis in Cyprus (367–403), former monk, a strict adherent to the Nicene position, and author of the *Panarion* (*Refutation of All Heresies*, written 374–7), incessantly battled Origenism, and in particular John Chrysostom and John II of Jerusalem in the Origenist controversy. See *Sozomen* 8.9 407–9. See Elizabeth A. Clark *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton 1992).

700 See *Sozomen* 8.9 413; and John Chrysostom *Post reditum a priore exsilio (sermo 2)* PG 52 443–8 especially 445.

701 See *Sozomen* 8 398–418; and Socrates Scholasticus *Historia ecclesiastica* (*Ecclesiastical History*) book 6 NPNF 2nd series 2 137–52.

702 Quintilian 5.3, 5.7.3–25

703 Erasmus has made some errors: Empress Eudoxia (empress from 400–d 404) and mother of Theodosius II, was not Theodosius' wife but Arcadius', who ruled from 395–408; nor was she an Arian but a staunch advocate of the orthodox position. John Chrysostom provoked her with open criticism of her manners, and she worked to have him exiled twice (403, 404). See ODB 2 740 ('Eudoxia').

fact *cacodoxa* [of bad repute],[704] namely Arian,[705] likewise that the emperor's court was packed with leading Arians, and that Theodosius indulged their wicked initiatives more than he was led by his own judgment. Regarding the prior judgment of Theophilus, it can be objected that, though he was a learned man, he was also insincere, ambitious, in love with wealth, as well as that he did not deal with Chrysostom by legitimate means, as a bishop should deal with a bishop, but by deception and violence. Epiphanius' judgment can be minimized by saying that he was an ignorant and simple man inasmuch as he had spent his entire life in solitude, and that Theophilus abused his opinion and goodness to mask his own cleverness. Finally, if he is now considered a saint, everything that saints have done in their life is not automatically right – to mention nothing else, even good men are deceived; besides, Jerome's calling Epiphanius 'holy' is not a title of holiness but of profession,[706] in the same way that today we call the Roman pontiff 'most holy.' Finally, the judgment of all the bishops who did not allow Chrysostom's name to be erased from the list cancelled all these precedents, and the testimony of the entire world abundantly refutes the rumours of his accusers.

Likewise, some today are too hard on Jerome on the grounds that, when he was incriminated by the rumour that his enemies spread about his being in love with Paula, he was compelled to hand over the slave of his bedchamber for questioning,[707] as well as that he sympathized with the Origenists (to make the world believe this a letter was circulated, made up under Jerome's name, in which he laments that he had once sympathized with the Origenists),[708] again on the grounds that he read Cicero and the poets contrary to his oath,[709] and finally on the grounds that he was a monk.[710] We see that even today some are hardly fair to Jerome, scorning him along with his monasticism.

* * * * *

704 As a name, 'Eudoxa' means 'of good repute,' but it can also suggest 'of good opinion' and thus be a sort of synonym of 'orthodox' ('of right opinion'), to which the opposite is 'cacodox' ('of bad opinion'). (Translator's note)

705 See Erasmus *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 273–4, 283–4, 295–6.

706 Jerome Ep 108.21 (20) (to Eustochium) CSEL 334–8, NPNF 2nd series 6 207

707 See Jerome Ep 45 (to Asella) CSEL 54 324–5, NPNF 2nd series 6 59.

708 Jerome *Contra Rufinum* 22–4 PL 23 (1883) 417–8, *The Apology against the Books of Rufinus* FOC 53 47–220, 190–4

709 Jerome Ep 22.30 (to Eustochium) CSEL 54 189–91, NPNF 2nd series 6 35–6; see CWE 61 154–93.

710 Jerome Ep 38.5 (to Marcella) CSEL 54 292–3, NPNF 2nd series 6 48–9. For Erasmus' scholarship on Jerome, see CWE 61. See also Eugene F. Rice, Jr *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore and London 1985).

Many hideous charges were made in the same way by the Arians against Athanasius as well,[711] even by falsifying his works, and since the heresy of the Arians is trying to raise its head again, it can happen that Athanasius too has to be defended against their slanders. Some can hardly bear the name of Origen, though Athanasius, a man so great in both learning and piety, excuses him in honorific phrases, innocently admitting that he stirred the minds of all the Greeks to the study of divine Scripture.[712] Some excuse the errors found in his works with the argument that these things were inserted by the wicked, others by saying that he propounded many of them only to offer the reader material for investigation.[713] As to the objection that it is not right to hold doubts concerning the dogmas of faith, their excuse is that in those times, when the church had not yet shown its opinion expressly, it was permissible to have doubts about many things that it was not permissible to doubt afterwards. But I am afraid that I seem to have said more than enough about this, and so we shall traverse with swifter foot something that seems rather remote from this purpose.

Akin to these that have been mentioned are the nontechnical ones,[714] which rhetoricians call σημεῖα, that is, 'signs,'[715] because these too are generally not worked out by the ingenuity of the speaker but are provided from elsewhere, in the way that clothing sprinkled with blood reveals a murderer. But signs are properly those things that arise directly from the subject being investigated and are revealed to the human senses, such as threats, which belong to past time, and a shout heard from the place, which belongs to present time, and the fact that the man questioned for the killing went pale, which belongs to later time, or that blood spurted from the body of the freshly slain victim while the person said to have perpetrated the killing approached.

* * * * *

711 See Athanasius *Apologia contra Arianos* (*Defense against the Arians*) NPNF 2nd series 4 97–148.

712 This tribute is not found in Athanasius, though there are other laudatory words; cf Athanasius *De decretis Nicaenae synodi* (*Defence of the Nicene Definition*) 6.27 NPNF 2nd series 4 168; and *Epistolae quattuor ad Serapionem* (Ep 4.9, 10) PG 26 (1857) 649. Socrates Scholasticus cites Athanasius' letter to Serapion; see *Historia ecclesiastica* (*Ecclesiastical History*) 6.13 NPNF 2nd series 2 147–8. See Godin 444 with n106 and 433, especially n64. On the Origenist controversy, see Elizabeth A. Clark *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton 1992). See also Ep 1844.

713 See Athanasius *De decretis Nicaenae synodi* (*Defence of the Nicene Definition*) 27 NPNF 2nd series 4 168.

714 For 'technical' and 'nontechnical' arguments, see 600–1 above.

715 See Quintilian's treatment of this in *Institutio oratoria* 5.9.1–16: 'Every artificial proof consists either of indications [*signis*], arguments or examples' (5.9.1).

For those who wish the term 'sign' to have a broader meaning, the fact that Atalanta wandered through the woods with young men is a sign that she was not a virgin,[716] and the fact that these things are indications of a corrupted soul is a sign that a man who is too elegant or walks too delicately is hardly a man.[717]

Again, some signs are necessary – rhetoricians call these τεκμήρια [tokens, signs][718] – such as that someone who breathes is alive, some not necessary, which the Greeks call εἰκότα, that is, 'probable,' such as blood on clothing, which could have flowed from the nostrils or from slaughtering an animal or another circumstance.[719] The preacher will have some use for these if he needs to speak against rashness in judgment, for the common man judges from signs that are not necessary. If they see someone not fasting or eating meat on the days when it has been forbidden, they immediately pronounce him a heretic: but it is possible for someone to eat with a good conscience and for people who fast and abstain even from eating fish to be heretics, such as the Manichaeans[720] and the Anthropomorphites[721] were, and the Jews right up to this day. If someone wears a feather in his hat or is dressed in a courtly manner, they pronounce him arrogant and haughty, though often the soul of a Thraso[722] lurks under a cheap and well-worn cloak. On the other hand, if they see someone dressed quite simply and cheaply or eating beans, they call him a hypocrite: but these can be marks of religion, not pretension. And so, since signs of this sort are ambiguous, no one should be judged from them unless they are confirmed by more definite signs or arguments. For instance, if someone wears conspicuously cheap

* * * * *

716 Quintilian 5.9.12
717 Quintilian 5.9.14
718 Quintilian 5.9.1–16
719 Quintilian 5.9.1, 8
720 See Augustine's writings against the Manichaeans: *Contra Faustum Manichaeum, libri XXXIII* (*Reply to Faustus the Manichaean*) CSEL 25.1 251–797, NPNF 1st series 4 155–345; and *De natura boni contra Manichaeos* (*Concerning the Nature of Good, against the Manichaeans*) CSEL 25.2 855–89, NPNF 1st series 4 351–65. The Manicheans, a sect to which Augustine once belonged, believed in a universe controlled by two supreme contrary powers, one good and the other evil. See also Augustine *Confessions* 5.3.6; *Augustine* 520–5; and 'Mani (or Manes) and Manichaeism' ODCC 1027–8.
721 See eg Augustine's response to the Anthropomorphites in Ep 148 (4.13) NPNF 1st series 1 502; see also Jerome *Contra Ioannem Hierosolymitarum* (*To Pammachus against John of Jerusalem*) NPNF 2nd series 6 430; *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 272 n135; and book 3 940.
722 Thraso is the boastful soldier in Terence's *Eunuchus*.

clothing, prays profusely, fasts often, but nonetheless carps at the innocent, is quick to vengeance, relentlessly unforgiving, intent on profit, one gathers unmistakably that he is a hypocrite. Some are rather severe by nature but not for that reason haughty; others are more affable by nature but not for that reason automatically flatterers. One is too careless in rituals, another too superstitious, but nothing prevents either from being a good man; but malicious carping, obscene language, and desire for revenge are necessary signs of a corrupted mind. If a heathen judge does not dare pronounce sentence against an accused on the basis of ambiguous signs, how much less fitting it is for us, who are forbidden absolutely to judge anyone,[723] to pronounce about a neighbour. Enough about signs.

But before we come to arguments, I must say first that some propositions are so obvious that they require no proof especially among Christians, such as that God is to be loved and worshipped above all things (for anyone who doubts whether God exists and whether he is supremely good is a pagan, not a Christian), and the fact that this world was made by God is known of itself to Christians, yet propositions of this kind must sometimes be proved if pagans have to be instructed or refuted. The Academics cast doubt even upon what is obvious to the senses,[724] but no one doubts whether five is more than three and whether something of six units contains something of four units together with half of that. Again, some things are not open to question when proposed in general but are when limited to a particular case. For example, no one doubts whether virtue should be pursued, but someone might perhaps doubt whether virginity is a virtue;[725] and no one denies that marriage is honourable, but it is possible to doubt whether it is honourable for priests.[726] It cannot be denied that fasting is something

* * * * *

723 See Matt 7:1.

724 Academics formed the sceptical school of philosophy in the second century BC, headed by Arcesilaus and Carneades; Cicero refers to Carneades (of Cyrene; d 129 BC) as 'the one and only true perfect orator' who 'in Aristotelian fashion' could speak on opposite sides of an issue' and 'argue against every statement put forward . . .'; see Quintilian 12.1.35; Cicero *De oratore* 3.21.80 and *Academica* 1 and 2. See the account of Carneades' mission from Athens to Rome in Plutarch *Marcus Cato (the Elder)* 22–3, where the Greek orator puts on dazzling oratorical demonstrations. See 'Carneades' OCD 206–7.

725 On the topic of virginity as a virtue, see Erasmus' colloquy *Proci et puellae* CWE 39 256–78; see especially the introduction (256–7), which gives further references to Erasmus' exposition of this and related topics.

726 See *Annotationes in 1 Timotheum* 3.2 LB VI 933–4; and *Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament: Galatians to the Apocalypse* ed Anne Reeve, introduction by M.A. Screech (Leiden 1993) 670.

praised by the devout, but it can be called into doubt whether one should praise the sort of fasting in which bodies are tormented and rendered less healthy. I have thought it worthwhile to give this advice because I have noticed that some expend great effort in proving the obvious but have nothing to say on controversial matters; for example, when they employ many arguments to demonstrate that heretics should not be heeded but punished, when what needed to be proved was whether those who teach such and such doctrines are notorious heretics; likewise, when they argue at excessive length that Scripture should be the judge in controversies and should settle the question but the point to prove was to demonstrate what Scripture has said about the question under discussion. Often, however, something that does not require proof requires amplification.[727] For example, everyone is aware that drunkenness is a vice, but some do not know how ugly a vice it is and what a train of ills it brings with it. As a general instruction one can also say that nothing is proved of itself, but something needs to be introduced extraneously to prove that which requires confirmation.[728] On the other hand, nothing is refuted by simple denial, and yet we hear some saying before their congregations, 'Some say that confession and satisfaction is not part of the sacrament of penance and is not necessary for the remission of sins. If this were true, our sacrament of confession would be nothing'; but this was the very thing that his opponents are proposing. Similarly, 'Some say that it is unnecessary to confess to a priest, that it is enough to confess to God: this is false'; but denial is not refutation – arguments would be required.[729] I am aware that an asseveration[730] sometimes has the force of an argument, but only if it is not alone.

Thus there is some force, both in confirmation and in refutation, in what some call sublation;[731] it is a sort of exordium to a proof, stirring the hearer to listen. Let the proposition be 'No age, however tender, is not capable of being trained towards virtue.' The sublation 'An obvious argument is to hand' is added, then the argument 'Because none is incapable of being trained towards vices,' next the confirmation 'We learn more easily what is

* * * * *

727 See Quintilian 8.4.1–29.

728 See Quintilian 5.8.5.

729 Cf Aristotle *Topics* 8.9–10.

730 For 'asseveration' (*adseveratio*), see Quintilian 1.4.20, 4.2.94, 11.3.2.

731 For 'sublation'(*sublatio*), see Quintilian 7.1.60, 9.4.48 and 55. Chomarat contends that Erasmus does not render correctly Quintilian's remarks on this device; see ASD V-4 369 39n. On the other hand, Erasmus might be referring to an author(s) ('some call') other than Quintilian who has not yet been identified. Cf Cicero *De finibus* 2.4.13–14.

natural than what is unnatural; moreover, virtue is natural, vice unnatural.' Likewise, if one had to refute the proposition 'Simple fornication is not a mortal crime,' the sublation would be 'That is what pagans say, not Christians,' – the argument 'Since St Paul calls to us more clearly than any trumpet, "Know this and understand it, that every fornicator or unclean or greedy person does not have a share in the kingdom of Christ and of God."'[732]

But native intellectual power will also make no small contribution to the finding of proofs, for one person sees more easily than another what follows from what and what contradicts what. Moreover, all confirmation consists either of things that follow or of things that contradict.[733] Moreover, some things follow of necessity, such as that a woman who has given birth has had intercourse with a man, or that someone whose heart is wounded will die;[734] some follow probably, such as that a woman who enjoys the carousings of young men is unchaste.[735] A similar distinction applies to things that contradict. Breathing and being dead are necessarily contradictory,[736] being a mother and hating one's son are probably contradictory.[737] Sometimes a proof is effected from what an opponent has conceded, if we were to demonstrate that obvious absurdity follows from it or that it is in conflict with obvious and generally accepted truth, such as when Ctesippus, arguing in Plato with Euthydemus, deduces from what he had conceded that his father is a dog and that the same dog is also the father of all gudgeons, sea urchins, and piglets and that these are everyone's brothers.[738] The ability to reason existed before the invention of dialectic, for it belongs to the category of the observed, like all the mathematical disciplines, not with the group of things that have been instituted by human judgment like laws and rhetorical theory.[739]

Neverthless, being trained in dialectic from childhood will be of no small help,[740] so long as no one, as the writer says, grows old there as if at the

* * * * *

732 Eph 5:5
733 For 'But . . . contradict,' see Quintilian 5.8.5.
734 Quintilian 5.9.5
735 Quintilian 5.9.14
736 Quintilian 5.9.6; Cicero *De inventione* 1.46.86
737 See Cicero *De inventione* 1.29.46: 'In the class of things which for the most part usually come to pass are probabilities of this sort. "If she is his mother, she loves him"'; see also 1.46.86.
738 Plato *Euthydemus* 298D–E
739 Cf Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 2.32.50; Quintilian 5.10.120.
740 Augustine's advice is much the same; see *De doctrina christiana* 2.31.48: 'The science of disputation is of great value for understanding and solving all sorts

Sirens' rocks;[741] and, as Augustine advises, one takes no pleasure in quarreling. Closely akin to this vice is what they today call sophistic,[742] with which inexperienced youth is immediately tainted in certain quarters; this teaches never being quiet rather than speaking. All the books that Aristotle wrote on logic are helpful, such as the *Isagoge* (which is in fact Porphyry's book but derived from Aristotle), the *Categories*, *On Interpretation*, the *Prior* and *Posterior Analytics*, *On Sophistical Refutations*; nevertheless, all of these are more suitable for judging or for arguing in the schools than for preaching, where his *Topics* and *Rhetoric* will be more helpful.[743] I do not know whether the future preacher will be aided by the practice, which Carneades[744] favoured, of speaking on either side or that of treating discreditable ideas, which the Greeks call ἀδόξοι [disreputable],[745] in the way that Plato's Glaucon maligns justice[746] and in my own memory someone praised ingratitude,[747] another drunkenness.[748] Since those who have placed too much effort in dialectic or in rhetoric, its kin,[749] have been trained towards this ability, Plato does not want those who have been selected for governing his state to touch these studies before their thirtieth year.[750] He gives as his reason the desire to prevent them having no firm opinions concerning the honourable and

* * * * *

of questions that appear in sacred literature. However, in this connection the love of controversy is to be avoided, as well as a certain puerile ostentation in deceiving an adversary.'

741 For 'Sirens' rocks,' see n10 above.

742 'Augustine ... sophistic': Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 2.31.48

743 For Aristotle's works on dialectic, see n26 above.

744 On Carneades, see n724 above; and Quintilian 12.1.35.

745 See Quintilian 4.1.40; and Aristotle *Topics* 8.9.160b 18–19.

746 Glaucon was Plato's brother; see Plato *Republic* 2.358C–367A, where Glaucon praises injustice.

747 See CWE 24 690 n2, and Chomarat ASD V-4 371 76n who suspects this is Giovanni Antonio Campano (Ioannes Antonius Campanus, 1429–77), author of *De ingratitudine fugienda* (Venice: Bernardinus Vercellensis 1502) 28 recto–40 recto, whom Erasmus mentions in *De ratione studii* CWE 24 690 and in the *Dilutio* CWE 83 127 as having 'condemned beneficence and praised ingratitude' (presumably with the philosophical intention of *nego ut affirmem*?).

748 Eg Christoph Hegendorff *Encomium ebrietatis* (Leipzig: Valentinus Schumann 1519); Philo of Alexandria *De ebrietate* (*On Drunkenness*). See *Dilutio* CWE 83 127, especially n65. Chomarat (ASD V-4 371 77n) suggests that this might be Filippo Beroaldo *Declamatio ebriosi, scortatoris, aleatoris de vitiositate disceptantium* (Paris: Denis Roce 1508). For Christoph Hegendorff, see CEBR II 171–2; for Filippo Beroaldo (2) of Bologna (1472–1518), see ibidem I 135.

749 See Aristotle *Rhetoric* book 1.1 (1354a–1355b); Quintilian 2.17.14.

750 Plato *Republic* 7 537D–539D

dishonourable as a result of habitually approving and disapproving anything at all.[751] Moreover, a ruler of a city ought to have a steely conviction about what is to be pursued and what is to be shunned and should have the greatest credibility with the populace: but much more so should the preacher, who is the true popular leader. But how will someone strengthen others if he is unsteady himself, or who will believe a man that urges honourable conduct when he knows that the same man can argue with equal ability against the advice he is giving?

Moreover, those who have rendered dialectic thorny and involved with their superfluous complications – as though that skill had been devised not for making correct judgments about truth and falsehood but for displaying one's own talent – impede judgment.[752] Those who are trained to excess in this sort of balderdash generally experience what tends to happen to those who practice the art of fencing indoors. The business is conducted according to strict regulations solely for display, and so great is his trust in this skill that he cuts with his sword an arrow shot at him from a bow – so long as the one who is to do the shooting stands where he is told to stand and shoots only upon command; but they say that there is nothing less suited to a serious conflict, to a war for example, than this sort of man. Indeed, it often happens to them in their discussions that there is a bloody spectacle whenever anger interferes with their exercise of the rules. As to those who have been exercised all their life in the schools with argumentations following the tenets of Thomas or Scotus, or the system of the nominalists or realists,[753] whenever they are called to give a congregation serious advice or engage in a serious battle against Jews or heretics, you would say that they

* * * * *

751 Plato *Republic* 7 538C–539D

752 Erasmus censures the scholastic theologians and philosophers of his own day; these complaints, however, have a long history; see eg Cicero *Orator* 32.114; and Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 2.37.55. See especially Juan Luis Vives *In Pseudodialecticos: A Critical Edition* introduction, translation, and commentary by Charles Fantazzi (Leiden 1979); see also Erika Rummel *Humanist-Scholastic Debate*, especially chapter 7 (Humanist Critique of Scholastic Dialectic) 153–92.

753 For the positions of the 'nominalists or realists,' see Étienne Gilson *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* 487, Part 11, 'The Modern Way.' See of course Erasmus *Moria* CWE 27 127 for Folly's praise of scholastic 'tortuous obscurities'; Ep 1581 to Noël Béda, especially 151–4 and nn73–83. See also Heiko Oberman *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich 1963); Charles Trinkaus 'Erasmus, Augustine, and the Nominalists' *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 67 (1976) 5–32. For a note on the the dominance of nominalist teachers at Paris in Erasmus and Béda's time, see Ep 1581 to Noël Béda (Basel, 15 June 1525) and n83.

act like raw recruits, while in their own field they were undefeated generals. The sensible study of dialectic aids natural ability, immoderate study impedes it, just as some devices are of such subtlety and difficulty that preparing the device takes more trouble than it would to accomplish the task even without the use of any device. For example, when a deductive argument [*ratiocinatio*] is made up of compound propositions,[754] it will be possible to explain the question more quickly than it could be grasped by adducing the proof from compound propositions; but the purpose of applying artistry is the same as that of applying a tool: to enable what has come into question to be explained more quickly and more easily through it.[755]

Arguments, then, as has been said, are partly discovered by native wit [*ingenium*], partly derived from theory, but you can discover them more quickly and more easily if you know from instruction the loci from which arguments are to be derived. Moreover, every proof is dependent on particular circumstances;[756] the overall division of these is that some are derived from the person, some from the case or the matter itself. If someone were to exhort to obedience by saying, 'Because women are by nature more subject to emotions and are weaker in judgment and reasoning, it is dangerous for them to be left to their own control, but they should be governed by the guidance of men'; likewise, 'The young, because they have not yet gained wisdom on account of their inexperience and are rather inclined towards vice because of the malleable character of their age, ought to obey the commands of their elders,' here the proof is drawn from the persons of woman and man, youth and elder. Again, if someone should

* * * * *

754 Ratiocination (or epicheirema) is a rhetorical method of deductive reasoning using syllogisms; see Cicero *De inventione* 1.31.51: 'All argumentation, then, is to be carried on either by induction or by deduction' (*Omnis igitur argumentatio aut per inductionem tractanda est aut per ratiocinationem*). But see Quintilian 5.10.1–8 for the difficulties in defining this term of rhetorical reasoning, and 5.14.5–19; see also Cicero *De inventione* 1.37.67: 'There are, then, five parts of an argument by deductive or syllogistic reasoning (*Quinque igitur partes sunt eius argumentationis quae per ratiocinationem tractatur*); see 1.37.67–1.38. See also *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.13.23 and 4.16.23. See also Lausberg §§357, 366–99, 419.

755 This sentence is a concise summary of the entire purpose of instruction in rhetoric and dialectic for Christian preaching: their precepts are to be employed in so far as they can assist the preacher in 'rightly handling the word of truth' (2 Tim 2:15).

756 On 'circumstances' (περίστασις), see Quintilian 5.10.104–25, 5.10.23, 5.8.4: 'Circumstance' [*circumstantia*] expresses 'those things which are peculiar to any given case' (5.10.104).

say that sobriety and honourable pastimes are necessary for the guarding of modesty because indulgence sharpens nature's goads like oil added to a stove[757] and drunkenness drives out shame, chastity's chief guardian, and idleness opens a sort of window to lustful thoughts,[758] he is arguing from the thing itself: indulgence, intoxication, and idleness. It will be profitable, therefore, to have knowledge particularly of what is proper to each person and what effect each thing produces; a reading of the comic poets and historians, knowledge of philosophy, and the broadest possible experience will assist with either. These too are called loci by the rhetoricians, neither altogether different from those that Aristotle taught nor altogether the same:[759] for some things agree, some come down to the same thing, some are different. The method of instruction is different, since rhetoricians are training an advocate, the Philosopher[760] is aiding judgment in general.

Generally speaking, the attributes of persons are the following:[761] family, nationality, country, sex, age, education or training, physical condition, fortune, rank, personality, pursuits, aspiration, previous words and deeds, emotion, counsel, name. Family advises us to consider the forebears from whom someone is descended (for it is fitting, and generally happens, that children are like their forebears), since this is sometimes the source of influences that tend towards living honourably or disgracefully. Nationality advises what is the particular talent or proper character of each ethnic group, for a Greek and a Scythian, a Roman and a German, a Frenchman and an Englishman do not share the same nature; likewise, each city has its own laws, customs, talent, and character, for there is a considerable difference between a resident of Sybaris[762] and one of Massilia,[763] between an Athenian

* * * * *

757 For 'oil added to a stove,' see Horace *Satires* 2.3.321, and Erasmus *Adagia* I ii 9 *Oleum camino addere* 'To pour oil on the fire.'

758 See Erasmus *Adagia* I iv 3 *Fenestram aperire, et similes metaphorae* 'To open a window, and similar metaphors'; see also Terence *Heautontimorumenos* 481.

759 Aristotle covers 'the topics common to the three kinds of rhetoric' (judicial, deliberative, epideictic) in *Rhetoric* 2.18–19.

760 Ie Aristotle; cf *Rhetoric* 2.18: 'The employment of persuasive speeches is directed towards a judgment . . .'

761 See Quintilian 5.10.23–31.

762 Sybaris (= Sibari), once a powerful city of the ancient world located in southern Italy, was destroyed in 510 BC. Inhabitants of the city were known for being 'a people who devoted immense efforts to the planning of their pleasures.' See *Adagia* II ii 65; for other adages dealing with Sybaris, see *Adagia* II ii 65, 66, 67.

763 Massilia (= Marseille) was known for its 'severity of morals' according to Plutarch, Cicero, and Valerius Maximus, but other authors present its

and a Theban.[764] Everyone is familiar with the difference of sex.[765] Also, different things are appropriate to different ages.[766] Moreover, the teachers that people have had and their teaching methods are more influential than their forebears. Physical condition embraces looks or ugliness, strength or weakness; a charge of adultery is more believable in the case of a handsome man than an ugly one, and violent crime is more believable in the case of a strong man than a weak one. Fortune pertains to wealth, kin, friends, dependents, rank, honours, and their opposites. Rank embraces many things: whether a person is famous or obscure, a magistrate or a private citizen, a father or a son, a citizen or a foreigner, a free man or a slave, married or single, a parent of children or childless, twice married or once.[767] Temperament varies greatly in people: some are fearful, some brave, some mild, some forceful, chaste, lustful, boastful, modest, etc. Pursuits: for the farmer and the lawyer have a different character, the trader and the soldier, the sailor and the physician. To these they add affectation; for it matters how each person wishes to appear, whether he is that or not, such as rich or learned, just or powerful, devout or courtly, merry or serious, a supporter of the people or of princes. In a person one looks at both past words and past actions, for the present and even the future can be judged from the past. Emotion differs from temperament in that the latter is constant, the former temporary, so that anger is the emotion, irascibility the temperament, and fear is the emotion, fearfulness the temperament, intoxication is the emotion, drunkenness or bibulousness the temperament, that is, the state of mind. To these they add a person's name, but an argument is

* * * * *

reputation differently. See *Adagia* II iii 98 *Naviges in Massiliam* 'You should take ship for Massilia,' where Erasmus relates Athenaeus' comment (book 12) that 'the people of Massilia were in old days so luxurious and effeminate, there was a common saying to this effect: You should sail to Massilia. He does not explain what the proverb means, but we can easily guess that it ought to be directed against effeminate people whose character and dress are unmanly . . .' Erasmus' comments seek to sort out the confusion about the city's reputation.

764 Athens was the city of the ancient world famous for its cosmopolitan culture; see *Adagia* I ii 57. Thebes in Boeotia was known as a backwater and a Theban as 'a stupid man with no cutting edge to his mind'; see *Adagia* I x 6 'Boeotian pig.'

765 See Quintilian 5.10.25.

766 Quintilian 5.10.23–31. Erasmus follows here the 'attributes of persons.'

767 'twice married or once' (*digamus an monogamus*), Erasmus follows Quintilian closely, but here he changes Quintilian's 'married or unmarried' (*maritus an caelebs*); see Quintilian 5.10.26.

seldom drawn from this in court unless given in accordance with the case (Aristides[768] was called 'the Just,' Alexander Severus 'Mammaea'[769] because he was too deferential to his mother) or unless the name seems to have provided the occasion for committing a crime. For example, because the haruspices had given the response from the Sibylline books that domination was being granted to three Cornelii, Lentulus with this assurance dared strive for tyranny since he believed that he was the third Cornelius, because he too was a Cornelius like them as well.[770] Quintilian thinks that anything drawn from a name is material for jokes rather than for arguments; for instance, Cicero makes many jokes on Verres' name,[771] to the effect that this thievish man 'con*ver*ted' everything to his own.[772] He makes jokes of this kind against a witness as a Phormio,[773] and Pliny the Elder against a historian who was called 'Bibaculus'[774] – and was, he says.

Now, with your permission, let us review each of these and try to show how they can assist the preacher, for the examples that have been presented by others properly belong to court cases, which accomplish little for the preacher unless we allow ourselves the licence that St Jerome does against an incurable heretic,[775] when instead of 'Vigilantius' he calls him

* * * * *

768 See Plutarch *Aristides*, especially 6.1: 'Of all his virtues, it was his justice that most impressed the multitude . . .' See also *Moralia* 343C.

769 Severus Alexander (or Alexander Severus), born in 208, became Roman emperor at the age of 14 (ruled 222–35 AD). During his rule his mother, Julia Mamaea, in effect ran the government. See Aelius Lampridius *Severus Alexander* 3.1 (*Scriptores historiae augustae* II): 'Alexander, then, the son of Mamaea (for so he is called by many) . . .' The translator, David Magie, notes that 'the appellation "son of Mamaea" was, of course, not official, but it is significant as denoting his entire subjection to his mother . . .' (*Scriptores historiae augustae* II 182–3). 'Mammaea' here is also spelled Mamaea.

770 See Cicero *In Catilinam* 3.9 and Quintilian 5.10.30–1.

771 See Quintilian 6.3.55.

772 Cicero's pun is on the verb *converro*, meaning 'sweep clean'; there being no English derivative of this verb, I have done the best that I could. (Translator's note)

773 See Quintilian 6.3.56.

774 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia* Preface 24: 'I suppose because the author was a toper – indeed Tippler was his name.'

775 Jerome Ep 109 (to Riparius) CSEL 55 354–5, NPNF 2nd series 6 212–14: 'You tell me that Vigilantius (whose very name *Wakeful* is a contradiction: he ought rather to be described as *Sleepy*) has again opened his fetid lips and is pouring forth a torrent of filthy venom upon the relics of the holy martyrs; and that he calls us who cherish them ashmongers and idolaters who pay homage to dead men's bones.' . . . 'You tell me farther that Vigilantius execrates vigils. In

'Dormitantius'[776] and brings his homeland into the charge on the grounds that he wrote Iberic nonsense because he lived near the Iberi.[777] Indeed Augustine thinks that 'Manichaean' is an appropriate name because of the 'maniacal' doctrines that he spouts.[778]

Family is unquestionably effective in the epideictic, suasorial, hortatory, and consolatory type, for in the deictic type we praise the same things that we advocate in the deliberative type, and we exhort to the same things. It is disgraceful to have declined from the praiseworthy character of one's ancestors, noble to have surpassed them in glory. If we admit an anagoge here, all those who have been grafted upon Christ through faith and through the bath of rebirth are the children of God,[779] whence it is the more disgraceful for the deeds of Satan to be seen in their life. The Lord too attacks the Jews on these grounds, saying that they are not the children of Abraham, whose faith they were unwilling to emulate, but the children of the devil, whom they resemble in their deeds by plotting the death of an innocent person; for he was the first murderer of all, and it was at his prompting that Cain killed his brother Abel.[780] Hence he will be able to exhort as follows: 'If those who have been born in the worldly sense from famous and highly respected men do everything to measure up to their ancestors' glory, may we who are called and are the children of God protect the honour of this name, and before we undertake any disgraceful action let us consider our descent, let us regard the dignity of our family. Let us show that we are true and genuine children of God, so that we can say to him with a clear conscience what we say every day, "Our Father who are in heaven."[781] According to God, we have as

* * * * *

this surely he goes contrary to his name. The Wakeful one wishes to sleep and will not hearken to the Saviour's words, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak"' (213).

776 Ie 'Drowsy' (from *dormito* 'drowse') rather than 'Vigilant' (from *vigilo* 'be wakeful'). (Translator's note)

777 For 'Iberic nonsense,' see *Adagia* II iv 9 *Hiberae neniae* 'A Hiberian rigamarole.'

778 Augustine *Contra Faustum Manichaeum, libri* XXXIII (*Reply to Faustus the Manichaean*) 19.22 CSEL 25.1 520, NPNF 1st series 4 247: 'You swear, too, by your master Manichaeus, whose name in his own tongue was Manes. As the name Manes seemed to be connected with the Greek word for madness, you have changed it by adding a suffix, which only makes matters worse, by giving the new meaning of pouring forth madness . . .'

779 See Titus 3:5.

780 John 8:39–44

781 Matt 6:9–13

our fathers the patriarchs and prophets, praised by divine witness, and we have as our forebears the apostles, Christ himself as our brother, Lord, and parent, and together with him so many thousands of virgins, of martyrs joined to us by family relationship. Finally, the more closely we resemble each of the saints in piety, the closer our degree of relationship to each one.'

As to nationality, one is neither Greek nor barbarian, Thracian or Roman in Christ.[782] If we are willing, we all belong to the same nation of which it is written in Deuteronomy, 'There is no other nation so great that has gods so near them as our God is present for us,'[783] and likewise at Wisdom 4, 'Oh, how fair is a chaste generation with fame, for its memory is immortal, since it is known both before God and before men.'[784] St Paul addresses this nation in Philippians 2: 'That you be simple children of God, without complaint, without rebuke, in the midst of a corrupt nation, among whom you shine like lamps, holding up the word of life in the world.'[785] However, nationality and homeland must be considered without introducing a tropology;[786] for Paul deals in one way with the Romans, proud in their might, in another with the rich and greedy Corinthians, in another with the rather slow-witted Galatians, whom he criticizes quite freely, in still another with the Ephesians, who were interested in magic.[787]

One can say much the same about homeland: that we are all citizens of that Jerusalem that is being constructed in heaven out of living stones,[788] of which the psalmist writes, 'Glorious things have been said about you, city of God.'[789]

Likewise, there is no male or female in Christ:[790] delicate little maidens have displayed a more than manly strength; it is spiritual vigour that makes a man, not physical condition.

Nor is age to be judged by years: for old age is venerable, not long lived and not calculated by number of years; adults are whoever have reached the measure of the fullness of Christ,[791] and Scripture curses the child of a

* * * * *

782 See Rom 10:12; 1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:28; Col 3:11.
783 See Deut 4:7.
784 Wisd of Sol 4:1
785 Phil 2:15–16
786 'Tropology,' ie using this to draw a moral lesson.
787 Cf Eph 5:11–12.
788 Rev 19 and 1 Pet 2:5
789 Ps 87:3 (Vulg 86:3)
790 Gal 3:28
791 Cf Eph 4:13.

hundred years;[792] how many we see who are still infants in Christ and need the milk of rituals[793] though they have already passed their fiftieth year. Sometimes it is effective for criticizing as well; for it is disgraceful that we are adults according to the outer person but children and infants according to the inner one, and it is ridiculous that old men, whose authority should have recalled young men to seriousness, commit the same acts that they criticize in youths. It is also effective for admonition; for one gives different instruction to the old and to the young. Peter, when an elderly man himself, beseeches the elderly 'that they feed the flock on which they live, provide for it not by compulsion but freely and according to God, not for the sake of disgraceful gain,'[794] etc; he shows what befits the elderly on the grounds of age and what should be avoided by that age. The duty of old age is to instruct youth correctly. Greed is dangerous because that age is too concerned about money. So too Paul instructs Titus to advise old men 'to be sober, to be venerable and modest, to be sound in faith, charity, and patience'[795] because this age is rather inclined to tippling, foolishness, and delirium. He gives elderly women similar instructions, not to be tipplers, not to be slanderers, that their dress be of a sort to display their piety, that their speech and character be of a sort to teach other women sobriety.[796] Make-up and youthful dress do not suit an old woman, and many of them, from the twin fault of age and sex, are talkative and are worthless disparagers of their sex and age;[797] hence too 'old wives' trifles' have their name. Therefore, Paul prescribes that admonition should be adjusted according to the circumstances of age.[798] Next, with comparable thoughtfulness, he teaches what instruction should be given to girls, what to young men. Since recently married girls tend to be too bold towards their husbands on account of their beauty and youth and sometimes neglect children and family on account of youthful games and pleasures, he therefore prescribes that they be taught to love

* * * * *

792 Cf Isa 65:20.
793 Cf Heb 5:12 and 1 Cor 3:1–2.
794 1 Pet 5:1–2
795 Titus 2:2
796 Cf Titus 2:3.
797 This is the translator's emendation; *sexus et aetatis*, which here acts as an objective genitive with *obtrectatrices* (thus 'disparagers of their sex and age'), appears to follow *gemino vitio*, giving the sense 'many of them, from the twin fault of age and sex, are talkative and are worthless disparagers.' Cf Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.39.93; Quintilian 1.8.19; and *Adagia* III vii 24 *Asinus avis* 'The ass is a bird.'
798 See 1 Tim 4:7.

their husbands and to be subject to them,[799] to love their children and care for the rest of the family, to be kindly and courteous towards everyone. He prescribes that young men should be instructed to be sober because their age,[800] which is rather quick to violence and anger, is generally swept along by emotions and indulges extravagance. Moreover, sobriety embraces moderation of all the desires, of love, anger, hatred, pleasures. He advises the young Timothy to shun youthful longings and to conduct himself in his priestly office in such a way that no one has reason to disrespect his youth.[801] He also teaches him how he should conduct himself towards his elders (and he wants the young man to respect their age by not rebuking them if they require admonition but beseeching them like fathers),[802] towards old women, towards girls, and towards widows. And elsewhere he distinguishes among widows: he wants the younger ones to marry; those in their sixties he receives into the ministry of the church. Finally, in beseeching Philemon,[803] he draws his argument from age, on the grounds that he is already an old man. But in encomia, just as whatever has been done contrary to the dignity of one's age is rather disgraceful, so whatever has been done beyond the expectation of one's age is more honourable, so that whoring is more disgraceful in an old man than in a young one and wisdom is more praiseworthy in a young man than in an old one. Similarly, John draws a theme for praise from what is fitting [*congruentia*] for each age.[804] He writes to the young, congratulating them on the faith through which they have gained remission of their sins.[805] He writes to old men, whom he calls 'fathers,'[806] congratulating them because before dying they acknowledged him who never ages, though he exists eternally. He writes to mature men congratulating them for having overcome Satan by being strong in the faith. He writes to little children because they are coming to know their heavenly father. Therefore, it will help the preacher in many respects to know what fits each age.

Now, a consideration of education as well very often provides abundant material for speaking. In encomia of the saints, certain outstanding deeds would hardly be believed if their careful education were not known.

* * * * *

799 See Titus 2:4–5.
800 Titus 2:6
801 2 Tim 2:22 and 1 Tim 4:12
802 1 Tim 5:1–16
803 Philemon 9
804 1 John 2:12–14
805 See 1 John 2:12–14.
806 1 John 2:13

Thus we read that St Bernard's mother educated her son as if she were preparing him for solitude, not the court;[807] we read that Athanasius was educated this way in the bishop's house,[808] for bishops' homes were once schools of piety, whence they were also called monasteries.[809] From this there is abundant material for urging how much force correct or corrupt education has from tender years. Paul promises salvation to married women if they have educated their children religiously and kept them in the faith.[810] And in choosing a bishop one should also consider, besides other things, whether he has well-trained children.[811] Why say more? We see that almost the whole corruption of character comes from a corrupted education, and there is nothing more neglected by Christians. What good can be expected of adults who as children were educated from infancy among loose serving girls and wicked serving boys? They hear nothing, see nothing, learn nothing but weakness, indulgence, and arrogance. But an even more harmful contagion than this occurs if they imbibe their vices from their very parents. They allow mere boys to rush into war; what they learn there I am ashamed to record here – they allow them to live as they please, to drink, roam, sit idle, grow familiar with cards and dice, then have love affairs, go about prettily adorned with feathers, wear military dress, until they are imbued with every vice and harden their hearts against those who give good advice. Some come to their senses late and send their twenty-year-olds to school, where they very quickly become teachers of mischief to the others rather than students of integrity. Others exile their sons when still tender youths to the courts of princes to learn civility and courtly ways: but what, after all, are courtly ways? I shall say no more; let each make his own judgment. There remain the monasteries, especially those that admit at a tender age, such as

* * * * *

807 Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153). See the account of his birth and early age in the *Vita prima* 1.2 PL 185 (1860) 225–37.

808 See *Sozomen* 269–70.

809 See eg Possidius *Vita Augustini* chapter v in Augustine *Opera* ed Erasmus (Paris: Chevallon 1532) I fol 181C (Chomarat ASD V-4 379 267n); Rufinus *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia, Books 10 and 11* trans Philip R. Amidon (New York 1997) 26–7; and *Sancti Augustini vita scripta a Possidio episcopo* ed (with revised text, introduction, notes, and an English version) Herbert T. Weiskotten (Princeton 1919) 49, which tells of Augustine's monastery: 'Soon after he had been made presbyter he established a monastery within the church and began to live with the servants of God according to the manner and rule instituted by the holy apostles' (cf Acts 4:32).

810 Cf 1 Tim 2:15. This is not quite what Paul says.

811 1 Tim 3:4–5

the Benedictines particularly do, for Benedict did not forbid this in his Rule, and in the past, when piety flourished in the monasteries, they were like 'paedagogεῖα'[812] and schools that trained young boys towards learning and holiness. But now pure tyranny exists in some; they are constantly thrashed, and not for their faults, and instead of acquiring the precepts of virtue, they are flogged mercilessly on a whim to please the priors, as though this itself were a powerful ritual.[813] What then do they learn in their first years? Hymns (and they even learn them by heart), physical movements, and mere rituals. Not a word about the pursuit of piety: for how could they teach what they have never learned themselves? When they reach their sixteenth year, being now capable of judgment, they are regarded as having spoken their vows, that is, as slaves and captives. Moreover, what judgment could men make when educated in that manner? This tyranny is endured in the hope of greater freedom. That happens if some office should be delegated to them: having gained this, they compensate for their past slavery with licence and even take revenge by being crueler towards the boys than their elders were towards them. It is not permitted to make time for the Bible or to aspire to a purer piety if someone happened to want to. Soon they are told, 'Observe the customs if you want to be a Benedictine.' To a certain extent Benedict himself created the opportunity for this tyranny by ordering that youths should be compelled with the harshest blows if they do not obey orders.[814] They scrupulously observe the practice of beating, but they neglect the custom of giving good advice. And this is not a new complaint; a thousand years ago St Chrysostom complained on this subject that out of the hordes of monks who were living in the desert and whose practice of religion, involving only fasts, sackcloth and beans, and sleeping on the ground, fell short of what true piety teaches, many came out moody, irascible, intolerant of any slight, and simply mad when they were summoned to

* * * * *

812 A partially Latinized version of the plural of παιδαγωγεῖον (*paidagôgeion*), originally 'a room in a schoolhouse in which the παιδαγωγοί (*paidagôgoi*, the slaves who escorted boys to school) waited for their boys,' later 'school' (LSJ). (Translator's note)

813 Erasmus often speaks to this theme; see eg *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 324–34. This is not the model of the school for training the preacher and 'acquiring the precepts of virtue' and 'the pursuit of piety.'

814 See *Rule of Saint Benedict* trans Anthony C. Meisel and M.L. del Mastro (New York 1975) chapter 30: 'Every age and intelligence should be treated in a suitable manner. Youths who are at fault, or those who cannot understand the gravity of excommunication, shall receive just punishment (enforced fasting or flogging) so that they may be healed.'

the office of bishop.[815] But I shall not pursue this further; for a word to the wise is sufficient.[816]

I think that I have touched sufficiently upon physical condition in the epideictic type, as also about rank when we dealt with external properties, to which generally pertain those things that are embraced under the term 'condition'; I shall only add that much material for admonition is drawn from these. Those who are physically strong need to be goaded towards diligence and charitable duties; those who are less strong need to be admonished to be all the more intent upon offices that are performed with mental powers. Those who are vain over their physical beauty, which will soon pass away from old age or illness, need to be rebuked when they bear a soul ugly with vices, and mental beauty flourishes all the more with age and does not wither even in death; and those who compensate their physical ugliness with a beautiful soul should be praised.

Moreover, since certain vices tend to accompany a more illustrious rank (for example, luxury and love of pleasures follow wealth; arrogance and violence follow nobility and power; cowardice, on the other hand, follows poverty and baseness), the admonition must be adjusted in accordance with them. Paul wants Timothy to temper his own teaching in accordance with these circumstances: 'Instruct the wealthy of this world not to have haughty thoughts and to set their hopes not upon the uncertainty of wealth but in the living God, who provides us with everything for our enjoyment so that those who do good grow rich by good works, which are true wealth, so that by readily sharing their external wealth they may lay up for themselves a solid treasure in the world to be and gain eternal life instead of the contemptible riches of this life.'[817] Elsewhere he also consoles the poor, lowly, and powerless on the grounds that God has chosen them before the others.[818] James too, changing the situation, advises that the rich man should glory in the fact that someone who was exalted in the world has been lowered for religion's sake to the level of those who are lowly and downcast in the world's judgment, and that the poor man, on the other hand, should glory

* * * * *

815 See John Chrysostom *De sacerdotio* (*On the Priesthood*) 6.6–8 PG 48 (1862) 682–92, NPNF 1st series 9 77–83.

816 'A word to the wise is sufficient' (*sufficit enim admonuisse sapientem*); cf Plautus *Persa* 729: *Dictum sapienti sat est*; and the same in Terence *Phormio* 541; cf *Adagia* IV vi 84 *Sapiens divinat*.

817 1 Tim 6:17–19. Erasmus appears to be recalling this by memory; the quotation does not follow the Vulgate or his own New Testament version.

818 1 Cor 1:26–8

in the fact that, though he is scorned and humble in the world's judgment, in God's judgment he is the equal of kings and satraps.[819]

Likewise, Paul also tempers his admonition in accordance with the usual circumstances that attend each situation. He instructs husbands to love their wives; so far he has said nothing new, but he adds, 'As Christ loved the church.'[820] And because he pronounced that man was the head of woman and bids her be subject to man,[821] he tempers a husband's power: 'And do not be bitter towards them.'[822] Likewise, since children are in their father's power, he moderates this authority too by admonishing that fathers should not provoke their children to rage and should temper their criticism in such a way that the children are corrected rather than becoming downcast by thinking that they are hateful to their parent,[823] for there are examples in secular histories of sons who were reprimanded too bitterly by their father and committed suicide.[824] He instructs children to obey their parents. 'Yes,' someone will say, 'if their teaching is just, but my father is ill tempered and harsh'; so he tacks on 'In everything.'[825] And to keep this from seeming unjust, he adds, 'For thus it is pleasing to God.' What seems just to God should not seem unjust to us. Now, since the absolute power of slave owners often turns into cruelty, to such an extent that even secular laws have been compelled to restrain it (for some scarcely regard them[826] as human, and feed them less generously and with worse food than their own dogs),[827] Paul admonishes masters to give their slaves what is fair and just

* * * * *

819 Cf James 1:9–10.

820 Eph 5:25, 29

821 Eph 5:22

822 Although Erasmus appears to quote Ephesians 5, this admonition appears neither as a quotation nor as a paraphrase. Paul says at 5:28: 'So (also) husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.'

823 Cf Eph 6:4 and Col 3:21.

824 See Erasmus' brief account of the story of Decius Silanus, son of Manlius Torquatus, above at 569 with n523.

825 Col 3:20

826 Erasmus jumps ahead to his thought on masters and their treatment of slaves; the context becomes clear in the next lines.

827 For Roman legal measures to curb the cruelty of masters towards their servants, see Alan Watson *Roman Slave Law* (Baltimore c 1987), chapter 8 (Punishment of the Slave) 115–38, chapter 9 (*Senatus consultum Silanianum*) 134–8; Jacques Heers *Esclaves et domestiques au Moyen Âge dans le monde méditerranéen* ([Paris] c 1981); and 'Slavery' in *Classical Tradition* 892–5. See also Seneca *Epistulae morales* 47.

and to remember that they share with them a common Lord in heaven[828] so that they are more truly fellow slaves than masters, since the others have been made their brothers rather than their slaves. He inculcates the same thoughts in writing to the Ephesians[829] to cease their threats and keep in mind that, though they are considered of rather humble estate in the eyes of mankind, yet in the eyes of their common heavenly Lord a master is worth no more than a slave unless he has been superior in faith and charity. Again, since it is typical of slaves to talk back to masters or, if they are not bold enough for that, to hate them secretly and to complain about their cruelty and not to obey their commands sincerely but to serve only for appearances, he admonishes them to judge their masters worthy of every honour and to obey them sincerely,[830] as though they were offering this service not to a man but to God, from whom they ought to expect their reward if perchance they have gotten unjust and ungrateful masters. In a comparable fashion, he admonishes private citizens to pay to those who hold power whatever tribute, tax, respect is owed and to obey them not from fear of punishment but for their conscience's sake, since whoever resists legitimate power resists God;[831] and I have no doubt that he would have reminded princes and magistrates of their duty if the civilian power at that time had been in the hands of Christians.

More duties are owed to a citizen than to a foreigner, though much kindness is owed to foreigners, and this is why the Apostle so often preaches about hospitality.[832] And in actuality all of us who are Christians belong to the same city, the same household in fact, which is the church.[833] Similarly, we are all foreigners and strangers in this world.[834] But if being a Roman citizen profited Paul in the eyes of heathens,[835] how much more should it profit a Christian in the eyes of a Christian, since each is a fellow citizen to the other and both are of God's own household. Moreover, the fact that a person's nature not only contributes to the augmentation of praise or blame but even changes how an act looks has a rather broad application. It is more heinous to beat one's father than a stranger (the latter is an assault, the

* * * * *

828 Col 4:1; see also Eph 6:5.
829 Eph 6:9
830 Eph 6:6–7; Col 3:22
831 Rom 13:2
832 Eg Rom 12:13; Heb 13:2
833 1 Tim 3:15; Rom 16:5; cf John 10:16.
834 See 2 Cor 5:1–4.
835 See Acts 22:25–9.

former impiety), and killing a stranger is murder, killing a brother is parricide. Injuring a private citizen is an assault, harming a prince or magistrate is a crime of *lèse majesté*. On the other hand, many acts of a father towards a son are permissible that are not permissible towards a stranger, and many likewise of a husband towards his wife that are not allowed towards other women; and to have knowledge of a divorced woman is sexual misconduct, of another's wife adultery, of a nun incest.[836] Striking a lay person is an assault, a priest or monk is sacrilege.[837] Likewise, it is more base to cheat the young or to ruin a ward, a widow, and a destitute woman than another person. More could be said about variety of condition, but this much advice is enough; an intelligent man will readily devise from these examples similar and even better ones.

Furthermore, a particular knowledge of the nature of the mind will help in various ways with a great many things. However, variety here is so great that you would more quickly find people whose faces and voices you could not recognize than identify some peculiarity of nature. Many things that could be said about nationality, homeland, sex, and age fall into this locus.

But besides those common features there are certain particular marks, as it were, of characters that are detected only by the skilled and by those

* * * * *

836 Erasmus lays out the reasoning of canon law whereby a woman who has taken vows of religion (ie who has consecrated herself as a bride of Christ) belongs to him in spiritual marriage, which is a far closer bond than that of carnal marriage; consequently, one can argue that to violate this bride of Christ is incest, for as all Christians have Christ as a spiritual brother, one who violates the (consecrated) woman commits spiritual incest. Similarly, one who marries a spiritual sister – here a consecrated bride of Christ – commits spiritual incest. Although the logic has its weaknesses, some biblical passages use the metaphor of marriage to express the closeness of Christ's relationship to members of his church; see eg John 3:29; 2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:25–7; Rev 19:7–9, 21:2. See also Pope Gelasius I's enactment in Gratian's *Decretum* Prima Pars Dist. 27, C IX 'Incestuous are the virgins who marry after consecration': 'Virgins who marry after consecration are not so much adulterers as incestuous persons' ('Incestae sunt virgines, que post consecrationem nubunt': Virgines, que post consecrationem nupserint, non tam adulterae sunt, quam incestae'). Erasmus might have had in mind some Reformers, such as Martin Luther, who married the former Cistercian nun Katharina von Bora in 1525. See also CWE 67 58 n154.

837 Canon 15 of Lateran II (AD 1139) declared: 'If anyone, at the instigation of the devil, incurs the guilt of the following sacrilege, that is, to lay violent hands on a cleric or a monk, he is to be subject to the bond of anathema . . .' Tanner I 200.

who conduct a fairly close examination. Moreover, just as physicians sometimes give poison as a remedy if they have not noted what are the peculiar traits of each body (and in fact it is often necessary for a physician to know the nature of souls because it is sometimes the source of physical afflictions), so too a spiritual physician should know the particular emotions of characters in order to adapt his medicine more easily to each individual, not with his hand but with his tongue.

To understand this better, it is useful to examine the great variety that the ancient comic poets – men unquestionably very shrewd and very observant in noting human nature – attribute to persons. They wrote plays, but only a philosopher will write plays like the ones that Menander wrote.[838] But, in order not to waste the reader's time with long digressions, the *Andria* by itself will suffice for our purpose.[839] Three old men appear on stage there, Simo, Chremes, and Crito: Simo is passionate and somewhat ill humoured, but is nevertheless anxious to appear clever; Chremes is calm and never gets hot, being concerned only with what the situation requires, and he isn't only calm himself but also calms others as much as he can; Crito is a poor and honest man and intolerant of slanders precisely because he is honest. Likewise, two young men of thoroughly dissimilar character: Pamphilus loves passionately but dissemblingly, and keeps his head even when in love; Carinus has a simple character devoid of cleverness or design. Two slaves: Davus is crafty and sticks to his design; Byrria has no design but counsels only desperation. This is enough as a specimen of something whose variety is simply boundless.

You could find a comparable difference in men renowned for holiness. What was admirable in Athanasius was a certain resourcefulness and economy, in Cyprian the ardour of faith, in Basil a lofty soul tempered by a remarkable affability, in Chrysostom a zeal to teach, hatred of ambition and ostentation, in Jerome intellectual fervour and severity of lifestyle, in Augustine civility and unwearied joy in disputation, in Ambrose a natural amiability even in rebuke, in Benedict a love for country life and a resulting severity, in Bernard an admirable zeal for true religion and a resulting enormous fondness for building monasteries in the most desolate places, in Francis a remarkable contempt for all things that seduce us to the world, to

* * * * *

838 Menander (342/1–293/89 BC), Greek playwright of the New Comedy, considered one of the greatest comedy writers of the ancient world; see OCD 669–70.

839 Written by the Roman playwright Terence (Publius Terentius Afer), c 185 or 195–159 BC. The production notice (*didascaliae*) for Terence's *Andria*, reconstructed by Donatus in the early fourth century, states that the Greek original of the play was written by Menander.

such an extent that he himself did not want to learn to read and did not allow his brothers to learn if they had not learned already; however, he did not pursue solitude, either because he wanted to draw everyone towards contempt of the world, or else because he wasn't training farmers but men to teach the people (if the grace of speech had been given to them) or to make their living by manual labour or, if none of this was enough, to take refuge with begging as their 'holy anchor.'[840] If someone were to compare the others in this way, he would find that all were dear to God for their different way of life, since the nature of their souls was different.

But how far will it be profitable to know this? First, to keep us from judging rashly, unaware that the difference lies not in their pursuit of piety but in the nature of their souls. Anthony loved solitude, Basil used to call the monks into the city; Jerome drank water and fed upon beans, Augustine used to drink wine, though very sparingly, did not spurn the delights of food if they happened to be available, and was not bothered when they were not available or any less sober whenever they were. But now, whenever someone dresses a little too stylishly or dines upon foods a little too rich, or whenever someone is affable rather than austere, we immediately condemn our neighbour and twist everything into an accusation. Someone who likes solitude is called discourteous and like a wild beast; someone who is affable and at ease with the ordinary customs of society is called a toady; someone a little grim by nature is termed a hypocrite and haughty; someone too cheerful is called shallow. Enough about judgment.

Now, applying the same sort of language to everyone when consoling or rebuking[841] is nothing more than, as they say, putting the same shoe on each foot or applying the same cure to every body.[842] But Christian charity considers everywhere what is appropriate to each, and in the same way that fowlers and fishermen do not use the same bait to snare every kind of creature but have observed what attracts or repels each kind and apply what suits each, so it strives to apply to each person's nature the things that can attract it to true piety. Efforts that agree with the individuality of character turn out more successfully. In children you might find certain personalities immoderately bashful, sheepish, and timorous: a gentler admonition suits these. Others are impudent and a little wild: on these a harsher yoke should be laid. Some are rather high spirited but of fine quality nonetheless: these

* * * * *

840 For 'holy anchor,' see *Adagia* I i 24 *Sacram ancoram solvere* 'To let go the sheet-anchor,' meaning 'whenever one falls back on the final defences.' Cf *Querela pacis* CWE 27 297.

841 Cf 2 Tim 3:16.

842 *Adagia* IV iv 56 (3356) ASD II-7 *Eundem calcium omni pedi inducere*.

should be shaped towards piety with softer reins. Some are rather inclined towards anger, but are hardly stupid and are capable of being appeased: nature has created these for liberal studies. Others are calm and gentle, born to hold a magistracy or other public office. And, in order to avoid running through individual examples, admonition must be adjusted in accordance with the natures of all. There are some that you correct with very bitter rebukes or even with beatings, others that you might drive to desperation, still others to obstinacy and intolerance of all admonition. Thus some must be advised to take wives, some to embrace the monastic life, some to apply themselves to the study of theology, others to master agriculture or a craft.

Rhetoricians use the term 'pursuits' for the course of life to which each person has dedicated himself.[843] Careful observation of their properties will enable a teacher to grasp what he should teach to what persons and what persons he should deter from what activities. He will instruct courtiers to remember sobriety in their pleasures, to be straightforward and completely free of sham, to beware of being deceived but to deceive no one themselves, not to flatter princes basely, not to burden them with ill-omened advice, not to think that they enjoy greater licence because they are courtiers, but to live all the more honourably because they are exposed to everyone's gaze. He will instruct soldiers not to indulge in pillaging, not to kill and rob anyone contrary to the rules of war, not to harm their friends more than their enemies, not to be deserters or collaborators. He will advise priests to live soberly and chastely, to regard the sacred books as their hunting, cards, and dice, to set a shining example for the laity by their good life, to be trained by God's word to teach others;[844] and monks will be counseled not to indulge their belly, not to criticize or grumble against anyone, not to esteem themselves above others on account of their clothes and title, to refrain from foolish rituals, to delight their idle hours with holy books. Businessmen should be urged to trade without deceit, to abstain from usury, not to grow arrogant in prosperity, not to grow depressed in lean times to the point of despair or blasphemy, and to place their trust not in chance but in God. Likewise, every sort of craftsman must be taught not to pilfer anything, not to taint anything, not to conspire to demand a price greater than is just, to provide their promised labour in good faith, and not to delude themselves with excuses like 'I'm not doing anything new; all my fellow

* * * * *

843 'Pursuits' (*studia*); see Quintilian 5.10.27.

844 Erasmus reiterates his fundamental theme that the preacher is to 'be instructed in the word of God to teach others' (*instructi ad docendum alios*).

craftsmen are doing the same, and I'll be reduced to beggary if I continue doing everything in good faith'; but let them reflect upon the truth, that in God's eyes a sin is not excused by how many commit it, and frugality will preclude beggary. A craftsman is owed a living; he is not owed something to squander on drunkenness, luxury, idleness, dice and cards, or perhaps adultery.

Putting on airs is irrelevant to the preacher except to seize this human emotion as an opportunity for admonishing someone to be what he is eager to seem: for wanting to seem what you are not is either vanity or hypocrisy. Your heart is set on being counted among the nobility; do not accomplish it with false titles, with plumes or thefts, but embrace the outstanding virtues that bring true nobility. It is agreeable to be considered religious; the short cut to this is to be that which you want to be thought to be.[845]

We have already spoken above about past words and deeds. The preacher will find that a name, which some admit only as material for jesting,[846] is useful for many purposes, since in canonical Scripture names are generally believed to have been attached by divine providence, just as in the poets names seem to have been ascribed in accordance with the subject itself. For example, the man who invented the story of the tearing apart by horses of Hippolytus gave him the name 'Hippolytus';[847] the same is apparent in the case of Bellerophon, Ajax, and countless others, as also in the names of the gods, which Plato discusses at length in *Cratylus*.[848] In Scripture it is not fiction but God's forethought that intended the name to be an omen of the life to follow, especially if the person bore the typology of the one that the nature of his name fits; for example, Solomon[849] is called 'peacemaker' not because he was not a 'man of bloody deeds,' as his father had

* * * * *

845 For this quotation, see *Apophthegmata* CWE 37 224–5: 'When someone asked Socrates how he could achieve a good reputation, his reply was, "By striving to be what you want men to think you are."' See also Xenophon *Memorabilia* 1.7.1, where Socrates replies to Antiphon: '. . . the best road to glory is the way that makes a man as good as he wishes to be thought.'

846 Quintilian gives a lengthy discussion on jesting with words and names; see 6.3.45–112. See also Cicero *De inventione* 2.8.28.

847 As though from ἵππος (*hippos*) 'horse,' and λύω 'undo.' (Translator's note) For the story of Hippolytus' death and restoration to life, see Ovid *Metamorphoses* 15.497–546; see also Euripides *Hippolytus*.

848 See *Cratylus* passim; for the names of Zeus, Cronos, and Uranus, see *Cratylus* 395E–396C.

849 See 2 Sam 12:24–5 for the name of Solomon. The passage says further that God sent Nathan the prophet to bestow upon him the additional name of Jedidiah ('beloved of the Lord').

been, but because he bore the figure of Christ, peacemaker between God and mankind, who has built the church for us as an eternal temple in which God dwells eternally. Abigail, however, to calm an angry David, attributes his action to the man's foolishness, saying, 'The man is foolish in accordance with his name.'[850] We read that some had their names changed, for example that Abram became Abraham, Sarai became Sarah;[851] likewise in Genesis Jacob changes Beninomi into Benjamin;[852] and Simon was called Cephas,[853] which in Greek becomes Petrus, in Latin *petra* or stone, so that he was a type of faith that will yield to no troubles; likewise Saul was called Paul.[854] And it is not implausible that it was not by mere chance that great men received the names assigned to them. Basil did indeed have something 'royal' in his character;[855] Athanasius is now what he was said to be, 'immortal';[856] Gregory took his name from 'vigilance,' for he was a most vigilant shepherd.[857] In fact vices and virtues and many other things have had their names bestowed not without a particular rationale from which it will be possible to draw themes for encouragement and for discouragement. Thus Jerome to Heliodorus: 'What are you doing in a crowd, you who are a monk?';[858] for 'monk' is a word that suggests solitude.[859] The word 'bishop,' in fact, reminds those men of their duty,[860] and 'priest' is derived from handling 'sacred' things, not from 'sackcloth.'[861] Likewise 'king' comes not from 'plunder' but from 'ruling.'[862] Finally, 'man' in Greek is ἄνθρωπος, as if you were

* * * * *

850 1 Sam 25:25. Abigail is referring to her own husband, Nabal, whose name in Hebrew means 'fool'; she is not referring to David.

851 Gen 17:5 and 15: 'You shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name'; *Sara pro Sarai* ASD V-4 386 507. For the names Sarai and Sara, see Jerome's discussion in *Hebraicae quaestiones in libro Geneseos* 17:3–17) CCSL 72 21.1–22.2.

852 Gen 35:18. For the name Beninomi and Benjamin, see Jerome *Hebraicae quaestiones in libro Geneseos* 35:18 CCSL 72 43:11–20.

853 John 1:42

854 Acts 13:9

855 From Greek βασιλεύς (*basileus*) 'king.' (Translator's note)

856 From Greek ἀθανασία (*athanasia*) 'immortality.' (Translator's note)

857 From Greek ἐγρήγορα (*egrêgora*) 'be awake, watchful.' (Translator's note)

858 Jerome Ep 14:6 (to Heliodorus, monk) NPNF 2nd series 6 13–18; see 15.

859 From Greek μοναχός (*monakhos*) 'unique; only,' derived from μόνος (*monos*) 'one.' (Translator's note)

860 From Greek ἐπίσκοπος (*episkopos*) 'overseer.' (Translator's note)

861 Latin *sacerdos*, derived surely from *sacer* 'sacred, holy' and not from *saccus*, which was originally a large bag or sack, later 'sackcloth.' (Translator's note)

862 Latin *rex*, correctly derived here from *rego* 'rule' rather than from *rapina* 'plunder.' (Translator's note)

saying ἀνάτροπος [upturned],[863] so that the word itself reminds them that they are unlike brute animals, which nature has made prone and obedient to their belly, and bids them to raise their face and mind towards the heavens. Modesty takes its name from 'shame,' since shame is the best guardian of modesty,[864] luxury from 'relaxing,' because it relaxes and enervates mental vigour;[865] but I shall not pursue this limitless subject any further. I have given my advice; the thoughtful reader will understand how great a field is open here for persuasion and exhortation, and for rebuking those who do not live up to their name and those who are offended beyond all measure at the words for things, though they are not at all averse to the actions. For what prince would tolerate being called a tyrant? But if only they were all averse to tyrannical actions! And I shall not enter this field further; I am hastening to my remaining topics.

It has been shown how much material for speaking the preacher can derive from the accidental characteristics of persons; now it must be indicated what the accidental properties of a thing or case suggest. Quintilian treats these loci by combining them with the loci that Aristotle included in his eight books of *Topics*.[866] And in the first place, he puts cause, meaning of course final cause, since as a general rule the causes of each thing are four: the efficient, the material, the formal, and the final; for there is nothing but God alone that does not have an author by which it was made. The Son and the Holy Spirit have an author, though they were made by no one; God therefore is the universal and primary cause of all things, efficient and final. Likewise, there is no thing that does not consist of these two things, matter and form – matter, which is like the receptacle of all forms, form, which makes it be what it is rather than something else. For instance, the rational soul allows a human body to be a human, and the soul itself, since it is substance, has its own unnamed form that makes it a soul, not an angel.[867]

For everything that has been established has been established for a definite end,[868] though nothing forbids the same thing having different ends; for example, nature has given women breasts for feeding their young and also for the adornment of their bodies, just as the tongue was given to man for

* * * * *

863 'Upturned,' from ἀνά (*ana*) 'up,' and τρέπω (*trepô*) 'turn.' (Translator's note) For this etymology, see also Isidore *Etymologiae* 11.1.5.

864 Latin *pudicitia* 'modesty,' derived from *pudor* 'shame.' (Translator's note)

865 Latin *luxuria*, derived from the verb *laxo*. (Translator's note)

866 See Quintilian 5.10.32–94; Aristotle *Topics*.

867 On this question, see Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia q 75 aa 1–5.

868 See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia IIae qq 1–3 (Of Man's Last End).

many uses.[869] Nor does any person of sound mind undertake any business unless he is pursuing some end; but nothing is pursued except it is considered good or advantageous. An adulterer deems that pleasure is something good, and a thief is pursuing the possession of money as something good when he commits murder, though in fact having money in this way is bad and should be avoided. Therefore the end, which is called 'final' in the outcome, 'first' in the intention, aims at the acquisition, increase, or consolidation of advantages, and likewise the avoidance, diminution, or averting of disadvantages. But many are deceived by a false conviction in choosing these,[870] and in the delusion of their error they believe that what is impious is pious, for instance if someone were to be led into error to believe that the Arians held the right opinion about the Holy Trinity. Others are tricked by some disturbance of the mind, such as drunkenness and anger, both of which are a kind of madness, or envy, hatred, and immoderate love.

This locus,[871] then, is useful for many things, for minimizing or exaggerating a charge, such as if someone were to kill a friend while attacking an enemy; for he had intended something other than what he did. Again, it is more vicious to kill a man by trickery in order to take away his wife than if you were to kill someone by whom you have been injured through serious wrongdoing; being provoked mitigates some part of the crime. And Peter is not excused from murder if, as is probable, he attacked Malchus not with the purpose of cutting off his ear but of smashing his skull, for crimes are judged not by how they turn out but by the mind's intention.[872] On the other hand, it is mitigated because he was not looking for loot or anything of the kind but only to free his most innocent Lord from danger and was ready even to die with him.[873]

The end plays a major role in the suasorial type by propounding what good should be pursued, what ill should be avoided. Moreover, the end is so important that it changes the name of the deed. David is rebuked because he killed Uriah,[874] since what he sought was a crime; but Phineas earned praise for killing two people because he killed not from hatred, not from

* * * * *

869 See Erasmus *Lingua* CWE 29 249–412.

870 Cf Quintilian 5.10.34: 'But right actions have right motives, while evil actions are the result of false opinions, which originate in the things that men believe to be good or evil . . .'

871 See Quintilian 5.10.33–6.

872 John 18:10

873 Cf Mark 14:31.

874 See 2 Samuel 11; cf 1 Kings 15:5.

envy, not for the sake of loot, but to deter his people from a disgraceful example and to reclaim authority for divine law.[875]

In admonition and rebuke, moreover, the end will supply no inconsiderable material for speaking.[876] For what purpose was man made? To know, fear, and love his creator.[877] Whatever man does, then, is to be referred to the glory of God;[878] how detestable, therefore, are they who live as though born for luxury and drunkenness and other vices, not to say for the devil. For what a disgrace it is that all other things carry out the duties that they were created to perform – the sun shines, clouds send rain, oxen plow, asses bear burdens – and man alone does not recognize that for which he was born. Thus a king must always have his end drilled into him, a bishop his. For what did you become a priest? Not to live luxuriously or to heap wealth upon wealth, but to be available for sacred functions. Why did you become a scholastic? Not to give free rein to your frivolity, but to cultivate your mind with liberal learning. Why then are disciplines to be learned? In order to live well, of course, and to serve your country and friends. Why did you become a monk? Not to live in luxury and idleness, but to be dead to earthly desires and to be swept along totally towards the heavenly. Why did you become a judge? Not to fill your bookcases, but to protect the innocent, to restrain the wicked, to decide disputes between citizens. Great happiness would accrue in human affairs if each person kept his eye upon his target, not the one that desire has proposed, but the one that God and honourable thought has put before him.

Moreover, the end is so important that everything is judged from it, and the success of each endeavour is sought from it. Fasting in order to attune body to mind for the offices of piety is a holy work; fasting in order to be considered holy is hypocrisy.[879] Fasting in order to increase your wealth is greed; fasting in order to improve your physical condition, with no other aim than good health, is medicine. The same should be said about praying, about giving alms, and about other works of a praiseworthy sort.

What they call secondary ends are judged in the same balance. You give alms to help a poor man. Why do you want him helped? So that he

* * * * *

875 Num 25:7–11
876 See Quintilian 5.10.54.
877 Here Erasmus uses the phrase 'to know, fear, and love his creator'; elsewhere he gives it as 'to know, love, fear, and glorify his creator.' See n234 above.
878 Cf Ps 19:1 (Vulg 18:2); Ps 147 (Ps 146).
879 Cf Matt 6:16–18.

can thank you and be devoted to you because he was brought back to life? Your work is merely human. To obey Christ and to restore him in his members? You've hit your target. The laws of the heathen that refuse a reward to someone who has killed a tyrant for any aim other than freeing the state also have this aim; they also absolve a foreigner who has climbed a wall contrary to the words of the law and driven off an enemy. In fact, understanding of the laws is gathered from the end; whoever achieves this is seen to have fulfilled the law. Moreover, the final end brings a happiness beyond which there is nothing to desire. For example, a sheep has attained its own happiness when it clothes and feeds someone, for the animal was born for this purpose; a plucked flower, as it delights someone's eyes and nose, would thank its planter, if it could talk, because it was happy in achieving the end for which it was planted. Therefore, those who seek happiness in the things that do not fill a man's soul and do not make him tranquil are violently mistaken; whoever wishes to have a restful soul must find rest in God.[880]

Another circumstance of a thing is place;[881] consideration of this is useful for more than just conjectural proofs, for whoever undertakes an action selects a suitable place for it, but the nature of the place very often aggravates or lessens a deed, sometimes even changes its name. These are treated by the theologians as well, who teach that certain circumstances only aggravate a deed, some also change its appearance. As regards place, one considers whether it is sacred or secular, public or private, yours or someone else's, crowded or isolated, a poor man's or a rich one's, of good repute or ill. It was more disgraceful for Antony to vomit in front of the rostra in full view of the Roman people than if he had vomited at home;[882] and it is not unseemly for a good and earnest man to dance at home at a wedding, which it would be unbecoming to do in the marketplace, or to bare his body in the bath, which it would be disgraceful to do at a banquet; similarly, it is a more serious fault to chatter nonsense or bid for girls with your eyes in church than in the marketplace or theatre. Private money was taken, it was theft;[883] but because from a church, the charge of sacrilege is laid. You killed an adulterer caught in your wife, it was permitted by the laws; but you killed someone caught in a brothel, it's murder. Private doors were

* * * * *

880 Cf Augustine *Confessions* 1.1 '. . . for you have created us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.'

881 Quintilian 5.10.37

882 Cicero *Philippics* 2.25.63; see also Quintilian 8.4.8, 16.

883 Quintilian 5.10.39

broken down, it's unlawful damage; public doors were broken down, the charge is *lèse majesté*. You uprooted trees on your own farm, it was permitted; on another's, it's unlawful damage. You cried out at a priest at a banquet, it was permitted; you cried out at someone preaching in church, it's an act of sedition. At home you may speak and be silent at your own discretion; before a court you must speak or be silent in accordance with the judge's command. In Italy being drunk is more disgraceful than among the Germans, and at Athens it is honourable to practice a sedentary trade, at Sparta servile; on the other hand, skill in sophistry or oratory is considered contemptible among the Spartans, among the Athenians very fine. Cicero in his *Pro Milone* calls it foolishness to say at Rome that it is not right for someone to live who admits that he has killed a man, when so many have been praised in the city for killing seditious men.[884] From here one may rise to a tropology.[885] If it is shameful to live too dissolutely in a civilized city, how much more disgraceful it is to live by Satan's laws in God's city, which is the church; and if it is unseemly for Christians anywhere to be slaves to their gullet and to their belly, how much more ridiculous it is in a monastery, the school of sobriety and chastity. In these ways the consideration of place is useful for persuasion, for exhortation, for rebuking and reckoning.[886]

It is sometimes useful for emotions too, such as spite or sympathy. Milo's accusers were rousing spite by driving home the fact that he had killed Clodius not just anywhere but among the tombs of his ancestors;[887] and in Ovid, Ajax is indignant that he was forced to compete with the unwarlike Ulysses over a reward for courage in sight of the fleet, which he had defended from fire with his own courage; and it is crueler to kill a man in his own home than in a public street, in a city than in a field. Enough about place.

The characteristic of time also supplies no less material for argument.[888] But this word 'time' corresponds to two Greek words of different meanings, χρόνος καὶ καιρός [time as the measure of change and time as an opportune moment]. The first simply signifies time, of which there are three kinds, past, present, and future: for example, 'once,' 'now,' 'one day'; year, month, day, hour; 'under Alexander the Great,' 'under Caligula.' The second also

* * * * *

884 Cicero *Pro Milone* 3.7; cf Quintilian 5.11.12.
885 'Tropology,' ie for moral instruction.
886 Cf 2 Tim 3:16.
887 Cicero *Pro Milone* 7.17; see this example and that of Ajax in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (13.5) in Quintilian 5.10.41. See also 522 above.
888 See Quintilian 5.10.42–8.

indicates an opportunity for doing something, and so the Greeks, when they feel that someone has come opportunely, do not say ἐν χρόνῳ ἦλθες [you came in a definite period of time] but ἐν καιρῷ ἦλθες [you came opportunely]. Nothing at all happens that does not happen ἐν χρόνῳ [in the course of time], but many things are done that do not happen ἐν καιρῷ [in time], that is, at the appropriate time. And John 7,[889] when he says, in relating the Lord's words, 'My time has not yet come,' does not say ὁ χρόνος ὁ ἐμός but ὁ καιρὸς ὁ ἐμός, and Paul, Galatians 6,[890] 'And so while we have time,' ἄρα οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν; but John 5,[891] when speaking about the paralytic lying by the sheep pool, 'because he already had much time,' did not say ὅτι πολὺν ἤδη καιρὸν ἔχει but πολὺν χρόνον. Καιρός therefore embraces these kinds: 'in winter,' 'in summer,' 'at night,' 'by day,' 'at harvest time,' 'at vintage time,' inasmuch as these types inherently offer some opportunity or difficulty for doing something. The same thing sometimes happens by the addition of a chance circumstance, such as 'in time of plague' or 'war' or 'celebration.' Within the treatment of this locus there also fall in part those things that were mentioned earlier among the attributes of person, such as past words and past deeds. For from these is drawn a conjectural argument, which becomes more certain if the threefold difference of time (past, present, and future) corresponds; for example, 'you threatened death' is inferred from the previous statement, 'you went out at night' from previous actions and corresponds to opportune time, 'you anticipated his departure' from previous actions as well. A sound heard, a shout raised belong to adjunct or associated time. 'You hid,' 'you fled,' 'bruises and swellings appeared' belong to subsequent time.

Someone will say, 'You're training an advocate, not a preacher,' so I shall show what use comes to the preacher from this. These conjectures are often useful for proof. For example, if someone arguing against the wicked were to say that Christ willingly undertook death on the cross, he will draw his argument from past words, because the Lord himself predicted this so often to his disciples[892] and rejected Peter's discouragement;[893] from past actions, because he did not withdraw or hide but went away into his usual place;[894] from adjunct or associated time, because he did not defend himself

* * * * *

889 John 7:6
890 Gal 6:10
891 John 5:6; cf 5:2–9.
892 Eg, Matt 16:21, 20:18–19; Mark 8:31, 10:33–4; Luke 9:22, 18:31–3
893 Matt 16:22–3; Mark 8:32–3
894 Luke 22:39

and restrained Peter when he readied a defence;[895] likewise because he was led to death like a sheep[896] and prayed for his enemies on the cross;[897] from subsequent time, because when he returned to life he never reproached the Jews with their monstrous crime, through himself or through the apostles, and he took no revenge upon anyone but commanded that repentance and remission of sins be preached to everyone.[898] Indeed, it was shown before in the treatment of age how useful time is for advising, persuading, exhorting, consoling, and admonishing.[899]

Now, a difference in time often clarifies a question of law or of characteristic, for many things were permitted before the promulgation of the Law that were not permitted to the Jews under it, such as eating certain things, and under the Old Law the Jews were permitted things that are not permitted to us under the New Law, such as multiple wives, divorce, and the marriage of priests. On the other hand, many things are required of us that were not required of the Jews, such as baptism and a fairly secure knowledge of the articles of faith. In fact, it is sinful today to have doubts about certain things about which it was not wicked to have doubts in the early days of the church; and those who relapse after receiving baptism sin more grievously, and even secular laws punish someone who steals by night more severely than someone who steals by day. In the same way, it is more criminal for a rich man to close his granaries or demand an unfair price in time of famine than when the food supply is more plentiful, and it is more disgraceful to indulge in revels and processions during the sort of public affliction of the church that now prevails than in times of peace; and it is a more grievous fault to eat meat during Lent than at other times, and whoring or drinking or playing dice is more disgraceful on a feast day than on another. Similarly, an ill that is fresh can be healed more easily; vices to which a man has already become habituated over a long time are more difficult to cure. Moreover, the mass of men often uses time as an opportunity for sinning, such as when they convince themselves that everything is permitted on the days that precede Lent, as if we were not Christians then. Similarly, some convince themselves that nothing is not permitted in wartime; what

* * * * *

895 See Matt 26:51–2; Peter is not mentioned in this passage, but he is in John 18:10–11.

896 Cf Acts 8:32 (referring to Isa 53:7).

897 Luke 23:34

898 Luke 24:47

899 See 2 Tim 3:16, 4:2. Again Erasmus refers to the five biblical *genera* (*ad consulendum, suadendum, exhortandum, consolandum ac monendum*).

was sacrilege in peacetime is called military law in war. Again, some think it a disgrace not to get drunk at a wedding. The most ridiculous custom of all persists in Rome right up to the present day: as the pope is breathing his last (since it's too long to wait for him to die), everyone who is able to swarms in and seizes the property of the cardinals, citizens, and foreigners who own something that appeals to the looter. Their pretext for such a criminal action is the extremely stupid excuse that, when the pope dies, all laws have died together with him.[900] Princes ought to use every kind of punishment to check a custom so criminal and more than barbaric. Indeed, it would be more suitable, when a pope is dying, to entreat God with fasts, prayers, and alms to provide for his church in the choice of a new shepherd.

It is appropriate to a Christian mind to adapt every consideration of time to an opportunity for behaving well. The coming of night reminds us of silence and rest, reminds us to put aside hatred or anger towards our neighbour before sunset, reminds us to make peace with God if we have sinned that day.[901] The rising sun reminds us to walk honourably in the day like children of light, giving no one even the slightest trouble.[902] Another devout practice is conducted by those who have distributed Christ's life and death over the various parts of the day and night in order to remember them more easily. A feast day invites the pious to make their peace with God and with their neighbours, to lift up their minds from humble concerns to the contemplation of the heavenly, and to strive to grow rich from spiritual profit on holy days just as they have devoted themselves to secular profit on other days; it invites the impious to luxury, lust, drunkenness, and gambling. Thus the tranquillity and prosperity of the times invite good people to thanksgiving, to religious practices, to kindness towards the poor; the wicked it invites to forget God, so that plumped and fattened they neglect and abandon God, their creator and the bestower of their very prosperity, ungrateful towards God, cruel towards themselves, for they turn what has been given for the purpose of piety into matter for impiety. On the other hand, when times are rather grim, troubled by wars, deadly from plague, agonizing with hunger, those of a devout mentality understand that they are being challenged to penitence and the pursuit of a more severe life in

* * * * *

900 For this custom at Rome from the Middle Ages into the seventeenth century, see Laurie Nussdorfer *Civic Politics in the Rome of Urban VIII* (Princeton 1992) chapter 14: 'The Vacant See' 228–53.

901 Eph 4:26

902 Cf Eph 5:8 and Rom 14:13.

order to placate a God offended by countless crimes; those of wicked mind turn to grumbling and blasphemy.

St Paul frequently takes material for exhortation from the time: 'Behold now the acceptable time, behold now the day of salvation,'[903] and elsewhere, 'Night has gone forward, day approaches';[904] similarly, in commending a celibate life to the Corinthians, he says, 'Time is short,'[905] and he compares this life to the time of sowing and the life to come to the time of harvest.[906] All things have their time.[907] As long as we are in the body, the sowing must be done vigorously, not sparingly, as the Apostle advises, but abundantly; after this life will come the time not of sowing but of harvesting what each has sown.[908] What is it to sow abundantly or, as the Apostle says, in prayers? It is to serve everyone, but most especially those who share your faith,[909] and that wise preacher shows in many words what befits each time,[910] how a pious man adjusts himself to every time, so long as he maintains firmly what admits no exception, namely that he persist in the fear and love of God.

Rhetoricians subordinate chance to time on the grounds that the outcome of something pertains to subsequent time;[911] but we will have something to say more seasonably on this subject a little later when we handle the locus called 'from the outcome.'[912]

Ability[913] is the power of completing what is undertaken, for no one of sound mind approaches a task that he has no hope of completing, unless we say that hatred, anger, or drunkenness deprived him of his judgment; for uncontrollable emotion does not permit time for reflection.

Moreover, the two principal considerations in conjectural cases are whether the person was willing and whether he was able. Will is deduced

* * * * *

903 2 Cor 6:2
904 Rom 13:12
905 1 Cor 7:29
906 See Gal 6:8–9.
907 See Eccles 3:1.
908 2 Cor 9:6
909 See Gal 6:10.
910 See Eccles 3:1–15. Erasmus refers to the author of book of Ecclesiastes: 'The words of Ecclesiastes, the son of David, king of Jerusalem' (Eccles 1:1). Cf Eccles 12:9–10.
911 On 'chance' (*casus*), see Quintilian 5.10.48.
912 See Lausberg §§120, 356.2 and 371; and 672, 680, 710 below.
913 On 'ability' (*facultas*), see Quintilian 5.10.49–50, where he speaks of 'abilities' or 'resources' (*facultates*), and 7.2.44–5; see also Lausberg §§160, 162, 328.

from many things, especially from the causes of which I spoke before, from the hope of completion; for hope sometimes creates will. A conjecture becomes more probable when the nature of the mind agrees with the causes: he is ambitious and envious, he did not bear an impediment to his glory; and a man fearful by nature did not dare to attack a strong man with a sword, he dispatched him by poison.

In addition, the usefulness that this locus supplies for persuasion was already indicated when we spoke about the easy and the impossible.[914]

The preacher will adapt it not only to persuasion but also to consolation and to rebuke,[915] for instance, when he directs someone to put aside vain weeping. For what is the aim of mourners' tears except to bring the dead back to life?[916] Yet it is foolish to hope for what cannot happen. Likewise, those who seek happiness in external matters and in this life are acting foolishly in two ways, since those things have no part in true happiness, and perfect happiness can be no one's lot in this life. It is similarly helpful for rebuking those who slight those special virtues such as chastity, martyrdom, and voluntary poverty and deny that it is within human power to maintain them, that in fact it is foolish to attempt what you cannot accomplish. Those who are convinced that true piety can be attained by human ability are sinning from a different fault.[917] Every human ability proceeds from divine power; if that is present, things are easy that seem impossible to the human senses. Enough about ability, of which instrument seems to be a part.

For an instrument – such as weapons, troops, ships, engines – sometimes supplies the ability.[918] A deed is often judged according to the instru-

* * * * *

914 See above at 549–52.

915 For 'to consolation and to rebuke,' see 2 Tim 3:16, 4:2; see also introduction CWE 67 180 n497, book 2 559, 571–4 above.

916 See *Paraphrasis in Marcum* CWE 49 72–3.

917 This position falls into Pelagianism, a charge Luther and other Reformers laid against Erasmus. See Erasmus' works on free will, *De libero arbitrio*, *Hyperaspistes*, in CWE 76 and 77 (*A Discussion of Free Will, A Warrior Shielding A Discussion of Free Will against The Enslaved Will by Martin Luther, book one*, and *An Assertion of All the Articles of Martin Luther Which Were Quite Recently Condemned by a Bull of Leo X, article 36, A Discussion of Free Will, A Warrior Shielding A Discussion of Free Will against The Enslaved Will by Martin Luther, book two*). For Erasmus and free will, see: Schoeck (2) 298–309; see also Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle 'Erasmus and the "Modern" Question: Was He a Semi-Pelagian?' *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 75 (1984) 59–77. Following Quintilian, Erasmus ends his discussion of 'ability' and takes up 'instrument.'

918 Quintilian 5.10.51

ment. David cast down Goliath more gloriously with his sling than if he had attacked him with a spear,[919] and it is more wicked to kill by poison than by the sword; to kill with the tongue is more wicked than either.[920] This kind of murder, alas, is all too frequent in our world today. Examine them, you'll find them unarmed; look more closely, you'll find no aconite or hemlock, and yet they are wicked murderers. How can it be? They carry no spears, no stones, no swords or axes; they have no sort of poison. In fact, they have a very effective poison. Where? They carry it about not in a box but on their tongue; with it they kill many, many innocent people without being punished. 'The mouth that lies,' says the wise man, 'kills the soul.'[921] With this aconite they taint the minds of the naïve, this they drop into the ears of princes, and through this they kill the objects of their ill will; all the while they wash their hands and say, 'We are innocent of murder.'

In addition, the body is the instrument of the mind; some have a more favourable one, others one less adaptable to honourable service. Those who have a fortunate one must strive to outstrip others in virtue; those who have a rather disagreeable one must take care to supply their natural deficiency and must especially beware of providing cause or opportunity to their natural inclination. To give an example: if someone is rather quick to anger, let him not trust in himself or do anything when angry, let him avoid everything that aggravates his mind's impulse, such as drunkenness or conflict with quarrelsome people, and let him frequently turn over in his mind the remedies that we pointed out earlier in the *Enchiridion*.[922] Those who have a physical nature rather quick to arrogance, lust, or some other vice must be advised according to the same principle; but if Socrates was able through mental determination and exercise to divert elsewhere a nature liable to significant vices,[923] why should a Christian, assisted by Christ's grace and

* * * * *

919 1 Samuel 17, especially 17:49

920 On killing with the tongue, see: *Lingua* CWE 29 249–412, especially 262–85.

921 Wisd of Sol 1:11

922 *Enchiridion* CWE 66 1–127, especially 123–6

923 See Erasmus *De immensa Dei misericordia* CWE 70 69–139, especially 93. For this story, see Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 4.37.80, *De fato* 5.10; and Erasmus *Apophthegmata* 3.80 CWE 37 245: 'A physiognomist [Cicero identifies him as Zopyrus] who made known that he could tell with certainty a person's character from his physical appearance and the features of his face, having taken a good look at Socrates, declared that he was a deplorably stupid individual, add to that a womanizer, abandoned in his lust for boys, a tippler, altogether lacking self-control. When Socrates' friends heard all this they were wildly outraged and threatened the man. But Socrates held them back, saying, "He did not lie at

challenged by so many outstanding examples, not be able to do the same? Now, artisans know how to apply their instruments not only each to its own purpose but also to correct them and to adapt them to use; it is all the more disgraceful that our mind does not do the same for its body.

In short, the mind has had the body added to it so that it may use it to worship God and help a neighbour. Similarly, the individual senses and members of the body have been given for a specific use; for example, the eyes not for lustful sport but for tending to the other members; the ears not for delighting in idle tales but for knowing necessary things; the tongue not for disparagement, for quarrels or obscene language but for praising God, for serving one's neighbour; hands have been given not for violence but for honest work; the feet not for dancing but for necessary travel; the genitals have been given not for filthiness and lust but for legitimate procreation; and the belly has been given not for intoxication and luxury but for the necessary digestion of food. But those who misuse their limbs for dishonourable purposes behave no less absurdly than someone who ploughs a field with a sword or chops wood with a plough.

Moreover, it is also useful to choose a lifestyle in accordance with the aptitude of one's body. Those who notice that they have an immoderate propensity towards lust should take a wife;[924] those inclined towards intoxication should keep the company of the sober. As it is, many corrupt their faculties and render useless what nature has provided ready for use. They corrupt their intellect with idleness and drowsiness, they drown their memory in wine, exhaust their body's strength with Venus' nocturnal rites and immoderate lust; as a result, many have their eyes prematurely bedimmed or inflamed, are hard of hearing, bent, crippled, and palsied before their time.

You see how much material for speaking will be provided to the preacher by this locus, which rhetoricians call instrument, to which manner[925] is so close that it is nearly the same. For example, anyone who has used a sword to kill an adulterer caught in the act is not punished by the laws of the ancients, but anyone who has used poison is compelled to defend his case: the question arises from instrument. Those things that are excused or aggravated by the will pertain more properly to manner. Someone acted with good intent because the act was done openly, someone with evil

* * * * *

all; surely I was headed to become such a person if I had not handed myself over to be governed by philosophy."'

924 Cf 1 Cor 7:9.

925 On 'manner' (*modus*; Greek τρόπος), see Quintilian 5.10.52.

intent because he acted from ambush, at night, in a solitary place. This is how a physician is excused for having given to a woman at her request a drug to loosen her bowels that she then used to induce an abortion: because he gave it openly and would surely not have done so had he known that she was pregnant. Similarly, the expression, that is, the spirit with which you say something, makes the greatest difference. If you should call someone a glutton in anger, it's an insult; if you should say the same thing to a friend in jest, it's a friendly remark. Similarly, the manner is of considerable importance in judging crimes. This man debauched another's wife whom he met by chance or was even enticed to adultery or was unaware that she was married; another laid a snare with malicious devices, through go-betweens, through gifts, through intoxication, through poison, even against a woman whose reputation for modesty he begrudged, in order to be able to boast among his fellow buffoons that he had successfully laid seige to the modesty of a most praiseworthy wife. Each has committed adultery, but the adultery of the latter is a hundred times more grievous than the adultery of the former. What has been said about adultery by way of an example can be worked out through all kinds of crime: rape, theft, drunkenness, intoxication, murder, heretical error. But it is not my intention to pursue this now, either because it is limitless or because we think that we have given enough advice on this matter elsewhere, and it is useful to be reminded rather often that the errors commonly made in this respect are endless.

Now, before we come to those common sources of arguments that the dialecticians also call τόποι [commonplaces][926] and that you could call loci in Latin, the reader needs to be reminded that the word locus has four meanings.

Loci are called 'common' because they are handled by either side,[927] though not in the same case. For instance, someone who is incriminated by

* * * * *

926 Literally 'places,' translated in Latin by *locus* (with the plural *loci* in this sense, rather than the heteroclite plural *loca* used in the word's nonrhetorical senses). (Translator's note) For Cicero's presentation of *loci communes* (commonplaces) in the judicial genus, see *De inventione* 2.15.48–51.154; and for the deliberative and demonstrative genera see 2.51.155–78. See also ibidem 1.55.106–9, where for the *conquestio* 'a passage seeking to arouse the pity of the audience' he gives the standard sixteen commonplaces in a speech for the defence. See also Quintilian's comments on the former practice in rhetorical teaching of exercises in commonplaces, where he notes that Cicero composed commonplaces 'against vices' (*in vitia*) and Hortensius on general legal questions. See also Lausberg §§407–9.

927 See Quintilian 5.10.53.

witnesses argues that witnesses are not to be trusted; on the other hand, someone who is helped by them will speak in favour of witnesses, and similarly with the other things that we mentioned above when we dealt with nontechnical proofs.

Akin to this sort are the maxims[928] that we heap up outside the case, as it were, but in such a way that they serve the case we are pleading, such as augmentations of virtues and exaggerations of vices. For instance, when we accuse someone on the grounds that he has been led to his criminal association by wicked companions, it will be a commonplace to exaggerate verbally how important it is for protecting innocence to keep good company, on the other hand how familiarity with the wicked tends to destroy the character. But this too later.[929]

In the third sense loci indicate the foundations of arguments, which rhetoricians have adapted to every kind of case, such as the honourable, the useful, the pleasant, the easy, the necessary, etc in the suasorial type; family, homeland, physical attributes, and mental attributes in the epideictic type; in the judicial type, especially the negatory, the things we just mentioned.

The fourth loci are the general, which show what as a whole are the accidental properties of each thing and how arguments both necessary and plausible are drawn from each. These are shared by the orators with the dialecticians, though Aristotle wrote about these separately in his *Topics*,[930] not touching upon them in his *Rhetoric*. Moreover, they contribute a great deal both to judgment and to speaking, but the variety of authors has rendered their treatment rather involved, since there is adequate agreement among them neither about the terms nor about their number nor about their order. The one who has written most precisely about them in our own day is a man who deserves an undying glory, Rodolphus Agricola.[931] Moreover, he wrote

* * * * *

928 On 'maxims' (*sententiae*), see Quintilian 8.5 passim.

929 See book 3 654.

930 See Aristotle *Topics* 1.5: 'We must now say what are definition, property, genus, and accident.' See too *Topics* 1.14: 'For purposes of philosophy we must treat of these things according to their truth, but for dialectic only with an eye to opinion.'

931 For information on Rudolf Huusman (1444–85), see 'Rodolphus Agricola' CEBR I 15–17; and 'Agricola, Rudolf' ER 1 18–20. Here Erasmus refers to Agricola's *De inventione dialectica libri tres* (Deventer: J. LeFebre [n d]). See now *De inventione dialectica libri tres: Drei Bücher über die Inventio dialectica auf der Grundlage der Edition von Alardus von Amsterdam (1539)* ed Lothar Mundt (Tübingen 1992). As here, Erasmus frequently praises Agricola throughout his writings; see eg *Colloquia* (*De incomparabili heroe Ioanne Reuchlino in divorum numerum relato*) CWE

with the most exacting care, indeed in a style than which nothing can be more polished; but his desire to introduce certain subtleties, such as prime matter, and his digressions, in which he disagrees (with great subtlety indeed) at times with Boethius,[932] at times with Aristotle, at times with others, make it quite clear that he hammered out this work for the admiration of learned men, not for the instruction of children. We have not had the opportunity to see Themistius,[933] whose clarity Boethius praises; but Aristotle treats this argument in such a way that hardly anything could be more precise,[934] and so it has happened that the very attention with which he pursues all the most minute details has shed a certain obscurity before the reader. Boethius already expends enough sweat in bringing Themistius, Aristotle, and Cicero into harmony; we shall impart the material as simply as possible and not delay the reader with any awkward difficulties, for we are training a preacher here, not a rhetorician or dialectician.

Now, the general division of all questions is this: whether it is, what it is, what sort it is.[935] Whether something is is sought through conjectures, for example, if someone should doubt whether God exists. Even pagan philosophers regarded God's existence as established fact, not from the authority of Scripture, as with us, but from conjectures based on creation. That proved,

* * * * *

39 244–55. For Agricola's influence on Erasmus, see especially Peter Mack *Renaissance Argument* passim; and R.J. Schoeck 'Agricola and Erasmus: Erasmus' Inheritance of Northern Humanism' in *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisius (1444–1485): Proceedings of the International Conference at the University of Groningen 28–30 October 1985* ed F. Akkerman and A.J. Vanderjagt (Leiden 1988) 181–8. See also *Rudolph Agricola: Six Lives and Erasmus's Testimonies* ed Fokke Akkerman (Assen 2006).

932 For Boethius (c 480–524), see 'Boethius, Anicius Manlius Torquatus Severinus' ODCC 219. Boethius wrote a commentary on Cicero's *Topica*; see the later incunabular text *In Ciceronis* Topica *commentum* (Rome: Oliverius Servius 1484). The editio princeps of Cicero's *Topica* appeared in 1472; see James Hankins and Ada Palmer *The Recovery of Ancient Philosophy in the Renaissance: A Brief Guide* (Florence 2008) 44.

933 Themistius (c 317–90), author of paraphrases on Aristotle, which Boethius used in his philosophical works, *De interpretatione*, *In Categorias Aristotelis commentaria*, *In Ciceronis Topica commentum*. See 'Themistius' OCD 1053. For more on Boethius and Themistius, see *Boethius's In Ciceronis topica* trans Eleonore Stump (Ithaca 1988) 188 n34.

934 Aristotle *Topics*

935 Quintilian 5.10.53; Cicero repeatedly emphasizes this method of investigation; see eg *De oratore* 1.31.139, 2.26.113; *Orator* 13.44; *Partitiones oratoriae* 9.33, 18.62, 19.65–6; *De inventione* 1.8.11; *Topica* 21.82.

it remains to ask what God is; this too established, whether he is this or that. For some have thought that God is the all-embracing sky,[936] others have entertained the delusion that God is the nature of creation, others even more deranged have thought that God is the universal soul of the world. We believe that God is incorporeal and very simple substance than which nothing greater or better exists or can exist,[937] not because any accidental property accrues to God but because these things are truly predicated of God, whether in concrete or abstract terms. God is immortal and immortality, God is wise and wisdom, good and goodness, eternal and eternity, and the same for all the rest. Let the reader be aware that this has been presented as an example, not because it is right for a Christian to have doubts about it.

But since no one investigates the nature of things that do not exist, therefore the first consideration will be ὅρος [definition],[938] which some have preferred to call *finis* or *finitio* or *definitio*.[939] This briefly expounds the nature of something in accordance with the consideration of substance and substantial form. I am using the term 'substance' here to mean not the opposite of 'accident' but the solid and principal nature of each thing; for we do not only ask what is a man, but also what is justice – not because virtue is substance but because it is proposed in the manner of substance, just as rhetoricians ask what is a status, what a figure, what a trope, or lawyers ask what is an accusation, what an injustice, though none of these is truly substance. And yet, just as the faculty of reason is added to man not in the question, 'what is it,' but from the point of view of quality, so justice and thoughtfulness have their own forms added through which they are distinguished from other virtues. In this way terms of substance are sometimes used from the point of view of accidental qualities, such as when Seneca says, 'Whenever

* * * * *

936 See Cicero *De natura deorum* 1.13.35–1.15.39. For God as 'the all-embracing sky,' Cicero names Zeno; for God as 'the nature of creation,' Strato; and as 'the universal soul of the world,' Cleanthes, a student of Zeno the Stoic, and Chrysippus.

937 See *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 15: 'And so, just as the mysteries of Scripture call the highest mind, than which nothing greater or better can be conceived, God, likewise they call God's only Son the Word of that mind.' The expression recalls St Anselm's ontological argument in *Proslogion* chapter 15.

938 On ὅρος 'definition,' see Aristotle *Topics* 1.4: 'that part which indicates the essence [let us call] a definition'; Quintilian 5.10.54.

939 The sequence of thought is: the three questions to ask about anything are 'whether it is, what it is, what sort of thing it is'; here the first question can be taken for granted, so the question we must ask is 'what it is,' ie its definition. (A. Dalzell)

I have been among men, I have come away less a man':[940] 'man' is a term of substance in the first part, of quality in the second.

The dialectical precept that a true definition consists of a genus and a difference constituting a species is also true. For example, 'an animal is a sensible substance.' Substance is the genus, animal the species, and 'sensible' is added as the difference; if someone were to give it a more exacting examination, it is a property rather than a difference. And yet it completes the definition because it is changed through a specific word, so that the word 'animal' fits nothing that does not have the property of being endowed with sensation, and there is nothing endowed with sensation to which the word 'animal' does not apply. In addition, moreover, a single sense is enough for something to be called an animal, though as a general rule a complete animal has five senses; for there are some in which only one sense is detected, such as in those that cling or stick, which are called animals though incomplete. Authorities are uncertain whether sponges and jellyfish have sensation, and Pythagoras attributed sensation, though undeveloped, even to trees and plants;[941] the Egyptians consider fire an animal because it dies when its fluid has been consumed.

And there is no doubt that each thing has an internal form through which it is what it is and not something else, but because this generally lacks its own name, we misapply those that come nearest to the nature of the difference; for it is not difficult to find the genus of each thing. For example, if someone were to ask what is a man,[942] the answer 'animal' comes easily. But what is it that makes him a man, not an ass or an ape? If you were to answer, 'the faculty of reason,'[943] angels and demons will be animals, for though they lack bodies, they are not without a portion of reason, although the Platonic philosophers attribute natural bodies to them as well.

Moreover, a definition that fits something other than what is being defined is faulty, or the word of the defined applies to something to which the

* * * * *

940 Cf Seneca *Epistulae morales* 7.3. This quotation is probably best known from Thomas à Kempis' use of it in *The Imitation of Christ* 1.20.2.

941 See Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* (Pythagoras) 8.5.23.

942 See Quintilian 5.10.56, where he demonstrates how one arrives at the definition of 'man' as 'a rational animal.'

943 The classic definition of 'man' that Erasmus is heading towards is Aristotle's, 'an animal having reason' (*τὸ ζῷον ἔχων λόγον*). Erasmus states that Porphyry's addition of 'mortal' is inadequate, though it does separate us from angels (and demons). Note that Augustine uses this definition: *Homo, id est animal rationale, mortale*; *De civitate Dei* 16.8, which he might have taken from Porphyry. See also Quintilian 5.10.57–8.

definition does not apply, for instance, if you were to say, 'Man is a two-footed animal with its body upright,' for there is a kind of ape that walks with its body upright. Again, we will run the risk that many brute animals will compete to be regarded as men, for it is clear that in many there is both a recognition of simple concepts and a putting together of simple concepts, as the dialecticians call it, a syllogistic discourse when they deduce one thing from another; add to these memory and recollection, each of which is found by experience in some type of brute animal. Porphyry adds 'mortal,'[944] the addition of which word, though it separates us from the angels, nevertheless does not separate us from brute animals. Again, if this definition were perfect, Christ and those who rose with him would have now ceased to be men; besides, it is ridiculous that what is attributed to man as his own seems to be shared with both dogs and apes.

But nothing comes closer to the essence of the difference than τὸ λογικὸν εἶναι,[945] that is, capable of speech, for no animal truly speaks except man.[946] When a true difference fails us, then we have resort to what is closest to it, say to some accidental quality that is present in man alone and absent in no man in so far as he is a man.

But if this too fails us, we use the accumulation of many circumstances to accomplish what it was not possible to do with few but effective words. Cicero did not give this a name of its own; some call it 'description,' the Greeks weaken it by naming it ὑπογραφή [delineation].[947] For an illustration I shall exploit Cicero's example, 'Inheritance is money.'[948] Here 'money' is the genus, as long as it is understood in its early sense, so that it embraces not only cash but every possession, for it is well known that *pecunia*

* * * * *

944 Porphyry *Isagoge* 3.13. Quintilian states that 'the addition of the words "subject to death" [is not] adequate; for although this epithet gives us a species, it is common to other animals as well' (5.10.56).

945 τὸ λογικὸν εἶναι can mean 'possessed of reason' as well as 'capable of speech.' (Translator's note)

946 The use of the Latin *sermo* for *verbum* to translate the Greek ὁ λόγος is, of course, fundamental to Erasmus, especially in his exegetical writings. See *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46:15–18 and especially 16–17. See also Quintilian 5.10.56–8.

947 ὑπογραφή 'outline; sketch; general definition.' See Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* 7.60.9 (*Zeno*): 'Delineation (ὑπογραφή) is a statement which brings one to a knowledge of the subject in outline, or it may be called a definition which embodies the force of the definition proper in a simpler form.'

948 Cicero *Topica* 6.29. See the footnote on this passage in the Loeb edition of Cicero's *Topica* in Cicero *De inventione*, *De optimo genere oratorum*, *Topica* trans H.M. Hubbell, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass and London 1976) 2 402 n(a).

[money] is derived from *pecus* [livestock, especially sheep] because at one time wealth was generally founded upon flocks and herds.[949] But the genus does not complete the definition, because many have money who have no inheritance; hence the genus must be restricted: 'that comes to someone by another's death.' But not even thus is the definition complete, for the property of the deceased can reach someone in many ways without inheritance. Let the single word 'legally' be added; otherwise theft could be called inheritance. Now the definition seems nearly complete in all its details: 'Inheritance is money that comes to someone legally by another's death.' Something is still missing: 'And it has not been bequeathed by will or retained in possession.' Now it is complete. I shall not delay the reader with more examples; he will find it easy to devise others in the likeness of this one.

Furthermore, you could scarcely find any definition so carefully fortified that it is not open to contradiction in some respect if it should meet a disagreeable and somewhat captious interpreter. On the other hand one has to adjust one's language to the matter at hand. Lawyers define theft as follows: 'It is the fraudulent handling of another's property against its master's will.'[950] Accordingly, someone could quibble over whether adultery is theft because lawyers call fraud an injury; or with the same reasoning one could say that handling another's property without the owner's knowledge is theft; or that it is theft if he doesn't touch it but sells or hands it over to someone untouched; or even if someone pets a Maltese lapdog[951] without its mistress' permission. There should be no room for these quibblings among those who are students of truth rather than of arguing. A certain Richard, with the surname de Saint Victor, who is held in no small regard by those of the Sorbonne, defines an article of faith thus: 'An article is indivisible truth from God, drawing us towards belief.'[952] A sympathetic hearer

* * * * *

949 See Varro *De lingua latina* 5.19.95; cf Quintilian 5.10.55.

950 Cicero *Topica* 6.29

951 For 'Maltese lapdog' (*catella Melitaea*), see *Adagia* III iii 71.

952 Erasmus attributes this definition to Richard of Saint Victor (d 1173), whose extant works do not have this definition. It is likely Erasmus read this in Thomas Aquinas or in the *Sententiae* of Peter Lombard; see Thomas Aquinas *In III sententiarum* dist 25 q 1 a 1 q 1 arg 3–4. See also *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 1 a 6 obj 3, where Thomas quotes this definition: 'Further, it has been said by some [William of Auxerre (d 1231), *Summa Aurea*] that "an article is an indivisible truth concerning God, exacting [*arctans*] our belief." Now belief is a voluntary act, since, as Augustine says (*Tract. xxvi in Joan.*), "no man believes against his will." Therefore it seems that matters of faith should not be divided into

is satisfied by this definition, through which he understands the nature of the thing, just as in the human body nature has divided the arm from the hand, and the arm itself is divisible into more parts; but it has so connected the joints of the fingers that each joint cannot be divided further unless you break them: but breaking is not dividing. [953] Nevertheless, a quibbler will find much to criticize in this definition. How 'indivisible,' when the article 'Who was conceived from the Holy Spirit, born from the Virgin Mary' has been divided into two articles by more recent theologians? And since the ancients counted only twelve articles, while some more recent authorities have counted thirteen, others fourteen, it is generally acknowledged that some can be divided.[954] If someone should reply that some are called indivisible because they can indeed be divided but have not been divided, the counterargument is twofold. First, 'indivisible' means something different in Latin than 'undivided,' and some have been divided by more recent theologians, before Richard if I am not mistaken. Besides, who divided or joined them but a painter who assigned each of the apostles his own article?[955] Again, as concerns God, he does not seem to belong in all the articles: for example, 'Holy Church,' 'remission of sins,' 'resurrection of the flesh' do not speak about God. If someone should reply here that those too are referred back to God, by whose virtue the church is sanctified and by whose spirit sins are remitted and by whose power the dead live again, the reply

* * * * *

articles.' See 'b) Medieval Concept: Article of Faith' in *Encyclopedia of Christian Theology* ed Jean-Yves Lacoste 3 vols (New York 2005) I 448.

953 Erasmus' explanation of 'article' (*articulus*) follows the medical definition of a 'joint' or 'small member connecting various parts of the body'; see L&S 167 (*articulus*). See also the term's use in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.19.26.

954 Thomas Aquinas entertains these questions at *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 1 aa 6–8. Chomarat (ASD V-4 407 991n) notes that the separation of 'conception' from the 'birth' of Christ was formulated in Sixtus IV's constitution *Cum praeexcelsa* of 27 February 1477 on the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (DS 1400). Erasmus refers to the Scotists, proponents of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, as the 'more recent theologians,' who nearly secured the formulation at the Council of Basel (17 September 1439) but for the schism. Splitting this article into two demonstrates that an article is not indivisible, as Erasmus and other theologians acknowledge. Erasmus here calls into question the pious belief that each of the twelve apostles contributed an article to the Apostles' Creed. See also *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 241 n28 and 251–2 and n18.

955 Chomarat notes that Erasmus imagines a painter (*pictor*) having created twelve painted panels, each one with an apostle and an article of the faith ASD IV-4 407 998n. See more on this idea in book 3 932.

can be given that all virtues are articles of faith about God, because without God's grace there is no virtue. Finally, the addition of 'drawing us to believe' can be undermined as follows. Faith is founded in understanding; understanding, however, is free, and it cannot be compelled, it can be persuaded. Not even here is a possible reply lacking, but in my opinion it is frivolous. He would have given a more suitable definition as follows: 'An article of faith is irrefutable and divinely revealed truth, expressed in few words, which must of necessity be believed by those who strive to embrace eternal salvation through faith in Christ Jesus,' though the phrase 'through faith,' etc could be omitted.[956]

Now, some think that etymology contains a species of definition, since many names have been taken from the nature of what they designate,[957] for 'etymology' has its name from the fact that it is a true and fitting mark of the thing that it signifies.[958] For example, 'king' is called from 'ruling,'[959] 'law' from 'selecting'[960] what is advantageous to the state, rejecting what impedes it, and 'spouses' have their name from the fact that they share in happiness and sadness alike as though they carry the same yoke;[961] and those born after the inhumation of their father are called 'Posthumus,'[962] just as those who have been cut alive from their mother's womb are called 'Caeso.'[963] The difference among 'journey,' 'path,' and 'road,' as between 'sight' and 'light, is shown by the words themselves,[964] but we touched upon these to

* * * * *

956 Compare this with Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 1 a 4 and q 4 aa 1–2.

957 See Cicero *Topica* 8.35–7, 3.12; Quintilian 5.10.55 and 1.6.28–39; and Plato *Cratylus* passim.

958 From ἔτυμος (*etymos*) 'true,' and λόγος (*logos*) 'account.' (Translator's note) For etymology as a form of definition, see Cicero *Topica* 8.35–7: 'Many arguments are derived from *notatio* (etymology). This is what is used when an argument is developed out of the meaning of a word . . .' (8.35); see also Quintilian 1.6.28–31 and 5.10.55.

959 *Rex* from the verb *rego*. (Translator's note)

960 *Lex* from the verb *lego*. (Translator's note) See also Isidore of Seville *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* trans Stephen A. Barney [et al.], with the collaboration of Muriel Hall (Cambridge and New York 2006) 5.3.2.

961 *Coniuges*, derived here from the prefix *con-* 'together' and *iugum* 'yoke,' rather than from the verb *iungo* 'join.' (Translator's note) See also Isidore *Etymologiae* 9.7.20.

962 From *post* 'after' and *humus* 'ground.' (Translator's note) See also Isidore *Etymologiae* 9.5.22.

963 From *caedo* 'cut.' (Translator's note) See also Isidore *Etymologiae* 9.3.12.

964 For these etymologies, see Isidore *Etymologiae* 15.16.8, 15.16.4, and 13.10.14.

some degree earlier when we considered the circumstance of name with the intention of saying more when we review each one and show its use.[965] When Plato had defined man with 'Man is a two-footed featherless animal,' Diogenes let a plucked rooster loose into his school, saying, 'Behold Plato's man.'[966] This is perhaps a jest concocted against Plato, yet there are those who make definitions no less absurdly in their ignorance of dialectic.

Now, there are certain formulas[967] or maxims that somewhat resemble a definition but in fact are not. There are various forms of this kind, for when an obscure term is explained by a more familiar word, it seems to be a kind of etymology, for example if someone were to interpret *batuit* [pommels] as 'strikes,' for few people know what *batuere* [to pommel] means.[968] It is also a type when an example is put in place of a definition, for instance, if someone on being asked, 'What is substance?' were to say man, horse, stone. This sort of definition is mocked by Socrates when someone, on being asked what virtue was, replied, 'Justice, wisdom, bravery, temperance,' etc.[969] Then Socrates, with his customary εἰρωνεύων [irony],[970] said, 'Ahah, this man is leading out a parade of virtues for us instead of one virtue.'[971] A description is also made from accidental qualities, for example, 'A man is that which can be trained by teaching towards piety and liberal studies.' It is made by joining several things together when none is sufficient in itself, for example, 'A licentious man is someone who is too self-indulgent in his lifestyle, too extravagant in his adornment, too prone towards pleasure.' It is drawn from a

* * * * *

965 Book 2 616–18

966 See Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* 6.2.40, and Erasmus *Apophthegmata* CWE 37 290.

967 On 'formulas' (*elogia*), see Erasmus *Paraphrasis in Elegantias Vallae* ASD I-4 249: 'Secundo elogium est aperta testificatio sententiae suae, ut regis cuiusdam Hierosolymorum elogium est, malle se diademate quam literis carere.'

968 'Strikes' here translates Erasmus' *batuere* (more commonly *battuere*), a relatively rare word used once each by Plautus and Pliny to mean 'beat' and once each by Suetonius and Fronto to mean 'fence'; Cicero notes that it is an ordinary word sometimes used with an obscene meaning (though not quite so naughty as *depsere* [to knead], apparently). (Translator's note) See Cicero *Ad familiares* 9.22.4.

969 See Plato *Meno* 71E–72D.

970 εἰρωνεύων from εἰρωνεύομαι 'feigning ignorance; dissembling.' (Translator's note) Cicero comments on this characteristic of Socrates' method of dealing with others in dialogue; see eg *De officiis* 1.30.108. See also Cicero *De oratore* 2.67.270.

971 See Plato *Meno* 72A.

difference in the end: 'Whoever considers the good of the state, not his own, in governing is a king; whoever conducts his reign for his own private good is a tyrant.' Likewise, through a simile,[972] such as 'Adolescence is the flower of youth, old age the decline of life,'[973] 'Sin is the death of the soul.' From opposites: 'Loss is the opposite of profit,'[974] 'A father is someone who has children, a child is someone who has a parent,' or 'A dead man is someone who is not alive,' for sometimes one of the opposites is better known and more generally acknowledged than the other. Through analogy:[975] for instance, 'A man is a microcosm.'[976] From causes:[977] 'Day is the sun above the earth, night is the sun beneath the earth,' 'Sound is the clash of two bodies.' Now, even riddles vie to be included among definitions,[978] such as 'Man is first a four-footed animal, next two-footed, then three-footed.'[979] And, so as not to run through every imaginable form of definition ad infinitum, one is used to convey praise, for example, 'Law is the mind and soul and counsel and opinion of a city.'[980] For instance, when Paul says, 'Faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the proof of things that do not appear,'[981] it is more truly an encomium of faith than a definition, for when he is going to praise faith, he prepares his audience with this eulogy: 'Faith is so powerful that through it we believe things that can be comprehended neither by the intellect nor by the senses, with more certainty than if we had discovered them with our senses, and hope for things of which no trace appears

* * * * *

972 See Quintilian 8.3.72.

973 Cicero *Topica* 7.32

974 Quintilian 5.11.5–16, deals with 'arguments ... from things like or unlike or contrary.' See also 5.11.32–5.

975 See Quintilian 5.11.34.

976 See C. Marius Victorinus *Liber de definitionibus* 28: 'The Greeks define it this way: ἄνθρωπος μικρόκοσμος, that is, man is a lesser universe [*minor mundus*].' See *C. Marius Victorinus: Liber de definitionibus. Eine spätantike Theorie der Definition und des Definierens mit Einleitung, Übersetzung und Kommentar* ed Andreas Pronay (Frankfurt am Main 1997) 78. Many authors repeat this; see eg Jerome *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten* 9.13.328–9 (CCSL 72 331), *Commentarii in Hiezechielem* 1.1.236 CCSL 75 236–8; Thomas Aquinas *In II sententiarum* dist 1 q 2 a 3 contra 2.

977 Cf Cicero *Topica* 4.22 (efficient causes) 4.14–16, 4.56–66.

978 For 'riddles' (*aenigmata*), see Quintilian 8.6.52–3. See book 3 864, 931.

979 This is the riddle of the sphinx in Sophocles' *Oedipus tyrannus* 130; see Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae* 10.456b, who cites Asclepiades in *Stories from Tragedy*.

980 *lex est mens et animus et consilium et sententia ciuitatis*; see C. Marius Victorinus *De definitionibus* 26 (76–7).

981 Heb 11:1

meanwhile.'[982] In any event, had he wished to define faith, he would have said, 'Faith is a divinely instilled state of being through which we believe without any uncertainty everything that is necessary to our eternal salvation.'[983] Thus the man who said that comedy is 'the mirror of human life'[984] did not define it but indicated in a phrase what excellence it has; likewise, someone who were to say, 'Gold is the father of flatterers, the son of worries,'[985] is not defining it but delivering a short maxim.[986] It also takes the form of criticism, as in Plato's phrase 'Pleasure is the bait of the wicked';[987] it is a maxim that has the appearance of a definition.

* * * * *

982 Erasmus amplifies Paul's statement on faith in Heb 11:1; cf CWE 44 243–52.

983 For this definition (partial), see Thomas Aquinas *In I sententiarum, prologus magistri* q 1 a 3 q.a 2 arg 3. The phrase, 'everything that is necessary to our eternal salvation' (*omnia quae ad salutem aeternam necessaria sunt*), was taken up in the Council of Trent's decree on preaching as part of the substance of the bishop's *praecipuum munus* as teacher; see *Decretum secundum publicatum in eadem quinta sessione super lectione et praedicatione*, June 1546 (*Concilium Tridentinum* V 241–2).

984 David Galbraith points to the likely source of this quotation as being Aelius Donatus, who 'quote[s] a definition attributed to Cicero of comedy as "imitatio vitae, speculum consuetudinis, & imago veritatis" (an imitation of life, a mirror of custom, and an image of truth) . . .'' See 'Theories of Comedy' in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy* ed Alexander Leggatt (Cambridge 2002) 4. See also *P. Terenti comoediae cum scholiis Aeli Donati et Eugraphi commentariis* ed Reinhold Klotz (Leipzig 1838) xvi: 'De comoedia Donati, ut videtur, Fragmentum. Comoediam esse Cicero ait: *imitationem vitae, speculum consuetudinis, imaginem veritatis* . . . Comediam et tragediam togatam primo Livius Andronicus repperit, aitque: *comoediam esse quotidianae vitae speculum*, nec iniuria.'

985 Palladas *Epigrams* IX 394: 'Gold, father of flatters, son of pain and care, it is fear to have thee and pain not to have thee.' Many of his epigrams and those of other ancient Latin and Greek authors were published by Maximus Planudes (Venice: Aldus 1496). For Palladas' poems, see *Palladas: Poems* trans by Tony Harrison (London 1984). For Erasmus' acquaintance with Planudes' Aldine edition, see Ep 289 to Jean de Nève, Louvain, 1 August 1514. Palladas' epigram appears to have been attributed to Cato, supposed author of the *Disticha Catonis*, but Erasmus leaves the question open, regarding it of little relevance: 'I see no reason why they should be called Cato's, except that the sentiments are not unworthy of a Cato' (13–4).

986 'Short maxim' (*elogium*). See Quintilian 5.10.74–5 where he states that arguments can be constructed from short maxims of this kind: 'from consequences or adjuncts'; eg '"If justice is a good thing, we must judge rightly" . . . "What one has never had, one has not lost"; "A man does not knowingly harm one whom he loves.'

987 *Timaeus* 69D: 'Pleasure, the greatest incitement to evil.'

Genus and species follow.[988] Some prefer to call genus 'the whole,' species 'the form.' Genus is that which has the broader application, and it contains several species under itself about which a predicate is stated in that which something is. For example, to the question 'What is man?' the fitting answer is 'An animal,' and to the question 'What is justice?' the correct answer is 'Virtue'; for 'animal' subsumes under itself ass, horse, eagle, fish, and man, while virtue subsumes justice, generosity, thoughtfulness, fortitude, and temperance. But nothing prevents the same word from being a species when referred to higher things, a genus when referred to lower ones, just as the same man can be son to one man, father to another. For example, if 'animal' should be referred to corporeal substance, it is a species, if to horse, ass, man, etc, it is a class. Thus if 'virtue' is referred to a state of mind, it is a species, if to justice, thoughtfulness, fortitude, temperance, etc, it is a class. These are called ὑπάλληλα because they are subordinate to some and others are subordinate to them.[989] Moreover, the genus beyond which there is no advancing they call the most general genus, just as they call the most special species that ultimate species, which cannot be divided into other species but only into individuals; all the things in the middle are ὑπάλληλα. For example, if you were to rise from animate body to substance, you have reached the most general genus, unless you prefer to pass to being, which embraces accidental qualities as well; and if you have descended from animal to ass or man, you have nowhere to descend further except to this or that ass or man. Man, however, differs from man not in species but in category or in individual ways. Thus if you should rise from physical condition to quality, you have reached the highest genus, unless you prefer to rise to accident; again, if you should descend to generosity, to sobriety, etc, you have nowhere to descend further except to this one and that one. Yet there are such remarkable differences in these things called individuals that you are uncertain whether they are distinguished by species or by category only; for instance, there are horned asses[990] and horses with a very long neck, men with a single but elongated foot (they are called 'Shadefoots'),[991]

* * * * *

988 See Quintilian 5.10.55–7.

989 ὑπάλληλα ('subordinate' or 'subaltern'; literally 'under each other'); for this term, see Aristotle *Metaphysics* 5.10 (1018b1): 'Things are said to be other in species if they are of the same genus but are not subordinate the one to the other [ἕτερα δὲ τῷ εἴδει λέγεται ὅσα τε ταὐτοῦ γένους ὄντα μὴ ὑπάλληλά ἐστι], or if, while being in the same genus they have a difference, or if they have a contrariety in their substance . . .'

990 Aelian *De natura animalium* 10.40: 'In Scythia there are asses with horns . . .'

991 Pliny *Naturalis historia* 7.2.23. Called 'Shadefoots' (*Sciapodes*) 'because in the

with wings, with one eye,[992] with ears that droop to the ground; some use screaming as their language and shun the company of other men no less than do wild beasts. If you were to say, 'Reason separates man from brute animals,' it has already been said that reason is present even in brute animals, a rather dense kind in some, a clearer sort in others.[993] The same difficulty exists in grasses and plants and gemstones. A reminder is necessary that writers often use a genus for a species, sometimes also for an accidental difference; for instance, when they distinguish genera of eagles, either they are saying genus for species (if, however, any eagle differs from an eagle in species) or else they are calling an accidental difference a genus. Thus physicians divide celery into various genera, and Virgil says, 'What kind of men is this,'[994] though he is talking about inhuman behaviour. Therefore, genus and species do not inherently have the sense in which the dialecticians employ them but have been adapted to this sense by the dialecticians for the purpose of instruction. This has had to happen in all the disciplines; for example, στάσις [*stasis*][995] to the mass of Greeks means 'sedition,' to their rhetoricians 'the essence of a case,' while the same concept appears in the Latin rhetoricians as *constitutio*,[996] though in general a *constitutio* is a law that prescribes something by public authority.

Difference and property, of which I spoke already when the opportunity arose,[997] serve definition. A difference is a substantial form, which, when added to a genus, constitutes a species and distinguishes it from other species; for instance, reason (let this serve for the time being as a difference), when added to an animal, constitutes a man, distinguishing him from the

* * * * *

hotter weather they lie on their backs on the ground and protect themselvs with the shadow of their feet.'

992 See Pliny *Naturalis historia* 7.2.10: 'the Arimaspi . . . people remarkable for having one eye in the centre of the forehead.'

993 See 650 above; see also *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 369 and n9.

994 Virgil *Aeneid* 1.539. Virgil uses *genus* in its basic meaning of 'family' or 'type' rather than the specialized scholastic sense that Erasmus is discussing here. (Translator's note)

995 See Erasmus' discussion of *status*, 581–90 above. See Quintilian 3.6.1–104.

996 See Quintilian 3.6.2: 'What we call Issue (*status*), is called by some "Constitution," by others "Question," by others "that which the Question reveals." Theodorus calls it "the head [that is, "the most general heading"] to which everything is referred." These names are different, but the meaning is the same; it makes no difference to the learner what names anything is called by, so long as the thing itself is plain. What we call *status* the Greeks call *stasis*.' In his early work on rhetoric, *De inventione*, Cicero uses the term *constitutio* (passim), but in later rhetorical works he prefers the term *status*; see eg *Topica* 25.93–4.

997 See 649-58 above; see also Quintilian 5.10.55–62.

other brute animals. A property has the same force because it is a property according to the most rigorous reasoning, namely that which fits one species only and everything contained under it and always, like the power of speech in the case of man,[998] and the impediments that are contrary to human nature are no obstacle. What fits everything constituted under a species, but not them alone, is a genus of property.[999] For example, the property of fire is to burn; but other things burn as well, like movement, wine, and scents. Thus there is no fire that does not have light, but not only fire gives light, for certain gemstones also give off light in the dark, as do insects like fireflies and some fish and certain kinds of wood when decayed. Now, it is not only species or forms (Cicero loathes using *speciebus* and *specierum*)[1000] that have properties[1001] but nations, for example, blackness in Ethiopians, whiteness in Germans, treachery in Carthaginians,[1002] enthusiasm for warfare in Carians,[1003] stupidity in Phrygians,[1004] charm in Athenians,[1005] barbarousness in those beyond Silesia; likewise in persons, such as lying in a pimp, blandishment in a prostitute. Finally, there are certain properties of individual men, such as severity in Cato,[1006] affability and elegance in Hortensius.[1007] But I have spoken of these above, for they are useful for probable arguments, but the rhetoricians and the dialecticians do not discuss properties and differences in the same way.

To etymology, which he considers a genus of definition,[1008] Cicero subordinates conjugates, since in both cases an argument is drawn from the

* * * * *

998 See Quintilian 5.10.56–64.

999 Quintilian 5.10.58–62

1000 Ie Cicero sometimes used *forma* rather than *species* in order to avoid the dative and ablative plural form *speciebus* and the genitive plural form *specierum*; Latin was generally rather shy about using such forms of fifth-declension nouns apart from the ubiquitous *dies* 'day' and *res* 'thing.' (Translator's note) See Cicero *Topica* 7.30.

1001 Cicero *Topica* 7.30

1002 Cf Livy *Ab urbe condita* 21.4.9: speaking of Hannibal, Livy says, '. . . his cruelty was inhuman, his perfidy worse than Punic; he had no regard for truth . . .'

1003 See Erasmus *Adagia* I vi 14 *In Care periculum* 'Risk it on a Carian.'

1004 Erasmus *Adagia* I i 28 *Sero sapiunt Phryges* 'The Phrygians learn wisdom too late.'

1005 *Adagia* I ii 57 *Lepos Atticus, Eloquentia Attica* 'Attic wit, Attic eloquence'

1006 For the severity of Cato the Elder (Marcus Porcius Cato, 234–149 BC) and of Cato the Younger (Marcus Porcius Cato, 95–46 BC), see Plutarch *Cato Maior* and *Cato Minor*.

1007 See Cicero *Brutus* 88.301–3.

1008 Cicero *Topica* 8.8.35–8.9.38: 'Many arguments are derived from *notatio* (etymology). This is what is used when an argument is developed out of the meaning of a word. The Greeks call this ἐτυμολογία (etymologia), and this translated

actual affinity of the words, but the difference is that in etymology there is an explanation of a name, in conjugates the argument is drawn from the similarity and derivation of words.[1009] In Quintilian's opinion neither locus has much weight for proof;[1010] for example, if someone were to interpret 'assiduous' as 'rich,'[1011] claiming derivation from 'giving change,' or 'philosopher'[1012] as 'lover of wisdom,'[1013] it is an explanation according to derivation.[1014] But if you were to say, 'If a field is common grazing land, grazing in common is permitted,' it is an etymological linkage,[1015] since 'common grazing land' and 'grazing in common' are kindred words.[1016] And if a 'philosopher' is a lover of wisdom, then 'philosophizing' is nothing but applying oneself to wisdom.[1017]

To these is joined the locus that is called division and partition[1018] (for they distinguish these for didactic purposes), so that there is a division of a genus into its forms; for example, animal is separated into man, bird, ass, and fish, for a genus embracing all of these within itself is a sort of whole, and the things subordinate to it are like its members, whence Cicero too admits that species, which he himself preferred to call forms, are sometimes called parts as well. But it is a partition when a whole or, as some prefer to call it, an integral is separated into its parts as if into members, both in physical things and in those that are perceived by the intellect alone, such as when the human body is separated into head, shoulders, arms, chest, belly,

* * * * *

word for word would be in Latin *veriloquium* (veriloquence)' (8.8.35). Cf Quintilian 5.10.54–64.

1009 Cicero *Topica* 8.8.35–8.9.38; Quintilian 5.10.54–5.

1010 Quintilian 5.10.55 and 59, 85

1011 On 'assiduous,' see Cicero *Topica* 2.10, *De republica* 2.22.40; and Quintilian 5.10.55. Cicero sees the word *assiduus* as deriving from *ab asse dando*, literally 'from giving an *as*' (a coin of small value); see too Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 16.10.1–15. But see especially OLD *assiduus*, which gives the derivation as '*assideo* + *uus*.' (Translator's note)

1012 See Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 5.3.7–9, where he attributes the origin of the word 'philosopher' to Pythagoras when he was asked by Leon, ruler of the Philiasians, 'to name the art in which he put his most reliance; but Pythagoras said that for his part he had no acquaintance with any art, but was a philosopher.' Cicero declares that 'philosophy is a fact of great antiquity, yet its name is ... of recent origin' (5.3.7). See also Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* 8.8 (Pythagoras).

1013 Deriving from φίλος 'lover' and σοφία (*sophia*) 'wisdom.' (Translator's note)

1014 Quintilian 5.10.55

1015 Cf Cicero *Topica* 3.12; Quintilian 5.10.85.

1016 Latin *compascuus* and *compascere*. (Translator's note) See Cicero *Topica* 3.12.

1017 Cf Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 5.3.9, 1.37.89.

1018 Cicero *Topica* 5.28; Quintilian 5.10.63

groin, legs, and feet[1019] or a house into roof, foundation, and walls. These are perceived by the senses; the following belong to reason. Law is divided into statute, custom, and justice.[1020] If you were to divide 'state' into monarchy, democracy, oligarchy, and aristocracy,[1021] it will be a division by which the whole is separated into its parts; but if you were to divide 'state' into senators, knights, and the people, it will be a partition. In short, however, every division is either of a substance into substances, for instance, of animal into man and other brute animals; or of a substance into accidental qualities, for instance, one animal is two-footed, another four-footed, another footless; or of an accidental quality into substances, for instance, if you were to divide birds into eagle, owl, and other species; or of an accidental quality into accidental qualities, for instance, one scholar is learned by his own efforts, another trained by teachers.

Quintilian makes the locus from exordium, increment, and culmination subordinate to division on the grounds that everything can be divided into three things: beginning, continuation, and completion;[1022] for example, in a battle a quarrel (which Juvenal calls the 'trumpet of strife')[1023] is the exordium, the increment is the killing, the culmination the slaughter. The culmination is deduced from the beginnings; for example, 'I cannot expect a whole *toga praetexta*[1024] when I see no exordium.'[1025] On the other hand,

* * * * *

1019 Cicero *Topica* 6.30

1020 Cicero *Topica* 6.31

1021 Quintilian 5.10.63. Erasmus modifies Quintilian's 'three forms of state' (*respublica*) – 'of the people, of the few, of the one' – by adding 'aristocracy.'

1022 Quintilian 5.10.71–2

1023 For 'trumpet of strife' (*tuba rixae*), see Juvenal *Satires* 15.52: 'First come loud words, as preludes to the fray: these serve as a trumpet-call to their hot passions.'

1024 Erasmus presumably means the type of historical tragedy that went by the name *toga praetexta* (of which the *Octavia* wrongly attributed to Seneca is the only extant example) rather than the purple-bordered toga worn by underage children and by magistrates; see Chomarat's note (ASD IV-4 415 157–8n), however, which points out that Erasmus is interpreting a defective text of Quintilian here. (Translator's note)

1025 See Quintilian 5.10.71: *Non possum togam praetextam sperare, cum exordium pullum videam*. Donald A. Russell translates this: 'So here too is a Place for Arguments which support one another. (1) The culmination may be inferred from the beginning: "I cannot hope for the toga with a purple edge when I see the weave begins so drab."' He notes (69): '*Exordium*, "beginning," is from *exordiri*, which has the technical meaning in weaving of "beginning the web" or "laying the warp." *Pullus* is the word used of the drab clothing of the lower classes: compare 2.12.10. The phrase is probably proverbial: a low-class origin gives no hopes of distinction: Otto (1890), s.v. *toga*.' Quintilian *The Orator's*

the exordium is deduced from the culmination; for example, 'His resignation from the dictatorship is evidence that Sulla did not take up arms for the sake of power.'[1026] Likewise the quality of a deed is drawn from the increment in either way, for instance, when one asks whether a murder should be imputed to the person from whom the quarrel began, for murder is the increment midway between exordium and culmination.[1027] But these things are more pertinent to the treatment of time, about which I have spoken already,[1028] and of outcome, about which I shall speak soon.

Similitude, which the Greeks call ὁμοίωσις,[1029] is also assigned by rhetoricians to the figures of speech, since it not only serves for proof but also confers considerable clarity and distinction upon language; subjoined to it is supposition,[1030] analogy, example, and image, though this last one does not serve for proof but only for the vividness and authority of language. An example of ὁμοίωσις will be: 'Just as those who use poison to taint a public spring from which everyone draws water commits a most grievous sin, so those who corrupt a prince's mind with deadly counsels do the worst disservice to the state'; similarly, 'Just as in a dangerous sea voyage the rudder is entrusted not to someone who excels in wealth or rank but to someone who surpasses the rest in his knowledge of piloting a ship, so one should not consign rulership to someone who is richer than the rest or more outstanding in lineage but to someone who surpasses the rest in thoughtfulness and good faith.'[1031]

An example of supposition will be: 'Just as anyone would be a fool if he drilled a hole in a ship in which he was sailing, so those men act foolishly who plot the destruction of their homeland, the overthrow of which would

* * * * *

Education books 3–5 ed and trans Donald A. Russell (Cambridge, Mass 2001) II 402–3.

1026 See Quintilian 5.10.71.

1027 See Quintilian 5.10.72.

1028 See 637–41 above.

1029 On 'similitude' (*similitudo*; Greek ὁμοίωσις), see Quintilian 8.3.72, where he speaks of *similitudines* or 'similes' as 'an admirable means of illuminating our descriptions. Some of these are designed for insertion among our arguments to help our proof, while others are devised to make our pictures yet more vivid . . .' Chomarat notes that neither Quintilian nor Cicero gives ὁμοίωσις as the Greek equivalent for *similitudo*. Alternatively the word is rendered in English as 'comparison,' 'likeness,' 'resemblance,' 'simile.'

1030 For 'supposition' (*fictio*), see Quintilian 5.10.95–9, 6.3.61; see also Cicero *Topica* 10.45 (*ficta exempla similitudinis*); Erasmus *De copia* CWE 24 480–1.

1031 See a variation on this similitude at 664 and 705–6 below.

leave them exposed to danger as well.' The use of this has the broadest application in similes, examples, and comparisons; it will be most appropriate to the preacher, since it reasons from what is generally agreed and obvious, and it has a marvellous way of creating a visual impression: 'If Christ were visible and at hand, how would we revere his presence, with what adoration would we kiss the ground on which he had walked? But he is present to us in Holy Writ, speaks to us, encourages us – and we wickedly scorn him there! Who would dare either to say or to do anything improper in his presence? But as it is, everything is clear to his eyes, and as he looks on, we dare what we would not dare with a human witness – as though he were blind and deaf! If Christ were living upon the earth, what is there in our possessions that we would not gladly share with him? But look – he is present to you in your needy neighbour, and you refuse to give him clothes or bread.[1032] How abominable would someone seem to you if he attacked with insults or struck with blows Christ who appeared in the flesh?[1033] But you are not afraid to do this to him in his members.[1034] Whatever injuries you heap upon your neighbour you heap upon Christ. He is helped, he is harmed, though he himself neither needs any kindness nor is open to any injury. Does he not profess this himself openly in the Gospel? "Whatever you have done for any of the least, you have done for me."[1035] Christ is in heaven. What does it matter, since he sees, hears, senses what you are doing, what you are saying, what you are thinking, no less than if he were standing at your side? If there were some sorceress who used the magical arts to know even what you did in secret, would you not take careful pains not to do anything to provoke the witch against you? And you so confidently scorn God, whose knowledge you could not cheat even if you were to hide yourself in the depths of the earth.' The clever reader sees how many examples can be devised in accordance with this technique.

Moreover, there will be a *paragoge*[1036] if someone elicits the assent of the person with whom he is dealing by adducing many likenesses, either

* * * * *

1032 See Matt 25:35–40; cf 7:9.

1033 Cf Matt 26:67.

1034 See 1 Cor 6:15.

1035 Matt 25:40

1036 Chomarat (ASD V-4 417 20n) corrects Erasmus, giving *epagoge* as the correct term based upon Cicero *Topica* 10.42: 'This form of argument which attains the desired proof by citing several parallels is called induction, in Greek ἐπαγογή (epagoge); Socrates frequently used this in his dialogues.' The term *paragoge*, which is quite different from Erasmus' instruction here, is used by a number of Latin authors for 'a lengthening of a word, the addition of a letter or syllable

true or invented, and then infers that which most resembles what has been granted, a type of argumentation that was very familiar to Socrates. An example will be: 'If during a storm one man out of many had to be assigned to the tiller, which would you assign, a relative, someone on the handsome side, someone on the wealthy side, or the person most skilled in piloting a ship?[1037] The answer would be, the person most skilled. If you were afflicted with a dangerous disease, would you entrust yourself to the handsomer physician or the richer one or the more closely related or the one most skilled in healing? Again, to the most skilled. If you had children to be educated, would you choose as their guardian someone who was related or someone very noble or someone who excelled in learning and trustworthiness? Undoubtedly the person most skilled in educating children. If you had horses outstandingly handsome and valuable, would you entrust their care to someone commended by kinship or nobility, or to someone more conspicuous for his skill in caring for horses? Again to the one more conspicuous in skill. If you wanted to build a house, would you contract with someone more noble or someone better skilled in the art of building? Of course with the one more knowledgeable about building.' After proposing comparisons of this sort, he would add the purpose for which he adduced it: 'Therefore they act foolishly who in choosing a magistrate have greater regard for wealth, fame, or kinship than for a combination of skill in administering a state and trustworthiness.' Invented likenesses obtain the same force; for example, 'If someone were drilling a hole in the ship in which he was sailing, would he not seem insane? If someone tore down a house in whose collapse he would perish himself, would he not be considered mad?' After inventing others similarly in this way, let him infer: 'Therefore people are mad if, for the sake of revenge on certain persons, they plot the destruction of their homeland, whose safety is necessary for their own safety.' Nevertheless, one comparison will have the same effect as several, provided it fits. This is how Nathan enticed David to pronounce against himself by citing the similar case of the poor man and the stolen lamb.[1038] Something similar is said to have occurred among the Zeelanders. An ox belonging to a judge had killed a cow belonging to a certain farmer. He went to the judge and, after begging leave to say a few words, said when it was granted, 'My ox has jumped

* * * * *

to a word' (L&S *paragoge*); see eg Isidore *Etymologiae* 1.35.2: 'Paragoge adpositio in finem, ut ["admittier" pro "admitti"] ["magis" pro "mage" et "potestur" pro "potest"].'

1037 For a similar example, see Plato *Republic* 6.488A–E.

1038 2 Sam 12:1–4

over the ditches and killed your cow. What is the law?' The judge, not fearing a trap, said, 'You will pay; this is the law.' Then the farmer said, 'Lord judge, may I speak briefly?' (For a fine is assessed there if someone speaks in court without asking leave; that has been done to prevent quarrels arising from wordiness or time being wasted with irrelevancies.) And so, when leave to speak was granted, he said, 'I made a slip of the tongue; I meant to say, "Your ox has killed my cow."' At this point the judge, rather upset, said, 'That is another matter.' Then the farmer, after gaining leave to speak, said, 'No, it is the same thing, and you pronounced the right judgment.'

Examples accomplish the same thing as likenesses, and there is no difference except that these are drawn from things done with authority; for example, 'Just as a horse through gradual exercise is rendered more tolerant of bearing the greatest efforts, so the human body, if it gradually becomes accustomed to greater efforts, tolerates what another would not dare touch.' This is a likeness. An example will be that of Milo of Croton, who by carrying a calf several stadia day after day easily carried it the same distance after it had become an ox.[1039] Supposition also has a place in examples, as in likenesses too, if for example we were to pretend that some similar deeds were done by Milo or by some other person.

Many things drawn from brute animals or inanimate objects seem to be classifiable as examples; for instance, 'Elephants copulate only in the most remote places and kill anyone who happens to come upon them; how much more should considerable modesty be applied in the intercourse of spouses, however licit,'[1040] and 'Dolphins do not permit their young to travel unescorted; how much more should a man assign a tutor to his own children while still young,' and 'Every tree nourishes what it has borne; therefore it is fitting that mothers too should nourish their own children with their own milk.'[1041]

Analogy is scarcely distinguished from similitude,[1042] for example, 'The ratio of three to two is the same for six units to four units.' Here

* * * * *

1039 Quintilian provides this example [1.9.5]. See also *Adagia* I ii 51 *Taurum tollet qui vitulum sustulerit* 'He may bear a bull that hath borne a calf.'

1040 Erasmus has used the example of elephants and dolphins already; see 521 above.

1041 See 541–3 above for Erasmus' previous discussion of nursing.

1042 See 655, 662 above for Erasmus' previous words on analogy. Here Erasmus conceives of analogy as a mathematical proportion (2:3::4:6), which is 'analogous to' or 'like' conceptual analogies that compare two wholly different entities (eg the human body with the body politic or the function of the eye with the duty of the prince). For analogy as mathematical proportion, see Plato *Timaeus* 31C–32A; Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 5.3; and Lausberg §466.

there is an analogy; I am not certain whether it can be called a similitude. 'What the eye is in the body, a prince is in the state; it is fair, then, that just as the eye looks out for the entire body, so the prince should take counsel for the state as a whole.' Here perhaps it seems to be both, an analogy and a similitude.

Now, likenesses and examples also share the fact that they are drawn from an equal or from a lesser or from a greater.[1043] What Cicero adduces seems to be from an equal: 'If a guardian should show good faith, if an ally should, if someone to whom you have entrusted something should, if someone who has received a pledge should, a superintendent should as well,'[1044] for they all appear to be equal because they all hold something on trust. Lest the question of what it means to receive a trust take up anyone's time, Boethius explains: 'If someone in difficult times transfers a farm to a more powerful friend with the purpose of transferring it back when the danger is past, the person to whom the farm is transferred is said to receive a trust.'[1045] But someone might at times be uncertain about what is greater or lesser. It is greater to govern a kingdom than a household; therefore, someone who is capable of the former will be capable of the latter too. Again, it is greater to rule a city than a ship; and yet everyone who governs a city will not be able to govern a ship as well. And it is greater to be skilled in philosophy than in shoemaking; and yet someone who is capable of succeeding in the former will not automatically be able to succeed in the latter. Nor should one always argue according to ability. It follows logically, for example, 'If a sailor directs his ship with skill and care, much more should a prince guide the state with counsel and vigilance.' Similarly, it seems greater that God easily governs the entire world than that someone rules a city; and yet it does not follow logically that it is easier for man to furnish something that is lesser, for the analogy should apply both in the persons and in the circumstances. If Semiramis[1046] erected and ruled Babylon, it follows logically that a man too could accomplish the same, but 'If a woman gives birth, therefore

* * * * *

1043 Quintilian 5.10.87–9. And see Cicero *Topica* 18.68–71.

1044 Cicero *Topica* 10.42

1045 Boethius *In Ciceronis Topica* 4 PL 64 (1847) 1116–17; see translation in *Boethius's In Ciceronis topica* trans Eleonore Stump (Ithaca 1988) 114–15.

1046 According to legend, Semiramis was the daughter of the Syrian goddess Derceto (Phoenician Astarte) who beautified and ruled the great Assyrian city of Babylon. See Diodorus Siculus' account of Semiramis in *Bibliotheca historica* 2.4–20.

a man can too' does not follow. Now, by the addition of a negation, what was greater becomes lesser, and vice versa, for it does not follow that someone who cannot govern a state cannot govern a household, but someone who does not know how to rule his own household is much less likely to know how to rule a state. Thus Paul argues, 'How will the man who does not know how to be in charge of his own house look out for the church of God?'[1047] In a genus, then, that thing is the greater whose presence is more meritorious in accordance with common sense, and so God governing the world without difficulty is less than a prince easily guiding a state. Then, when we argue that 'God rules the world by providence; therefore a prince too should rule a city by providence,' we are more truly making a deduction from an example than from a likeness. Examples will be discussed in their place.[1048]

A line of argument that is made through likenesses is refuted through unlikenesses (Cicero calls this *differentia*),[1049] for resemblance is often deceptive. For example, 'Just as old silver is to be preferred to new, so old and established friends are more to be valued than new ones'; that is a likeness. This is an unlikeness: 'No, just as a new house or clothing is better than old, so a new friend should be preferred to an old.' To serve and to be a servant seem to be likenesses, though there is a great difference, for those enslaved for debt serve their servitude for a time; and yet the law that has been promulgated for servants does not apply to them. This is Cicero's example: 'You could not rightly pay what you owe to a minor, whether male or female, in the same way that you could rightly pay to the woman herself, without her ward's authority, what you owe to a woman.'[1050] Here there is a kind of similtude, because a woman and a minor are equally under guardianship, so that the law for dealing with either one seems to be the same; but the difference is that women were formerly kept under perpetual guardianship, minors only for a fixed time, and minors are not permitted to do anything without the authority of their guardians because their age makes them not yet suitable for judging what suits the family's interest the way that an adult woman can. Thus dissimilitude suits refutation better than proof. Therefore, in examples and in likenesses as well we must see to it that we neither deceive nor are deceived by a false appearance. 'If we have

* * * * *

1047 1 Tim 3:5
1048 See book 3 871–8.
1049 Cicero *Topica* 3.11 and16, 7.31, 11.46, 18.71
1050 Cicero *Topica* 11.46

had fathers of the flesh as teachers and used to revere them, much more will we obey the Father of spirits and live':[1051] the similitude has been applied correctly – obeying parents and obeying God are both God's command.[1052] But if someone were to argue, 'Parents, in a way, are teachers of minds; but if it is not right for a father of the flesh to marry his own daughter, much less is it permitted for a teacher to marry his pupil,' you see that the comparison is deceptive. And yet so many complicated decrees concerning spiritual affinity have arisen from it, though God never forbade anything of the kind.[1053] A husband who has converted his wife to Christ through use of the catechism is in a sense a father to her, and yet he sleeps with her without wrongdoing. Someone who reasons, 'Since the soul is infinitely more excellent than the body, a sin that brings death to the soul is more to be feared than a plague that threatens death to the body' is arguing correctly. But if someone reasons, 'If physical death frees one of the spouses from the bond of matrimony, much more does spiritual death,' I am not sure that he is arguing correctly. Scripture clearly provides the former instruction,[1054] nowhere the latter. Now, if we interpret spiritual death as the mortification of worldly emotions, I'm awfully afraid that those who commit themselves to the life of a monk with this intention are quite few. But if we take the profession itself in place of mortification, this of course is shared by all Christians; and yet if two spouses should receive baptism, neither becomes free to make a new marriage, though according to the similitude each ought to be free by the spiritual death of the other. But if we should say that the dead do not contract marriages, we fall into the heresy that condemns all marriage between Christians.[1055] Besides, if someone

* * * * *

1051 Heb 12:9

1052 Cf Eph 6:1; Col 3:20; Acts 5:29.

1053 Erasmus refers here to the canonical prohibition of marriage between a man and a woman on the grounds of spiritual affinity; eg a godfather at baptism is forbidden to marry his goddaughter. See Oswald Joseph Reichel *A Complete Manual of Canon Law* (London 1896) I 361–2: 'A similar disability extends to persons connected with one another spiritually or legally. By spiritual connection or affinity is understood the tie which exists between a god-parent and god-child, or between a spiritual father and one whom he has baptized or confirmed; by legal affinity the tie which exists between an adopted child and the adopting parents.' Reichel's footnotes provide the medieval canons supporting these prohibitions. See *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 245, especially 269–70 and 279–81. Voltaire's *L'Ingénu* satirizes this practice in the eighteenth century.

1054 See Rom 7:2 and 1 Cor 7:39.

1055 This reference is somewhat obscure. See 1 Tim 4:4 for Paul's warning against

should argue, 'Just as it is useless to apply a remedy to someone whose heart has been wounded because his illness is beyond healing, so someone whose mind is injured by a capital offence should not be called to repentance, for it is useless to apply medicine to the dead,' he would be arguing incorrectly from a likeness. But there will be an opportunity elsewhere to say more about this.[1056] I have noticed that in certain schools many argue from similitude, though analogy has little effectiveness in serious argumentations. I suspect that, since both lawyers and physicians are invited in the theologians' formal disputations, this first arose from a desire to toss in something that an audience of mixed professions could recognize.

Now I shall continue what I started. Some things are not only dissimilar in some part but even contrary and contradictory;[1057] but Aristotle in general calls these ἀντικείμενα [lying opposite], though you would more correctly call them 'opposites,' for there are various ways in which one thing is opposed to or inconsistent with another.

There is a type of opposites that are called contraries, and some of these are so contradictory that they allow no mean, such as luxury and frugality, health and illness, soundness and weakness, diligence and sloth, while others do allow a mean, such as white and black; for just as it does not follow that someone who is not foolish is wise, so it does not follow that someone who is not black is white, since he can be reddish, pallid, or yellowish. Each one belongs to things that are contained under the same genus, like wisdom and folly under condition, white and black under colour; for the opposition dissolves once the genus is changed. For example, if you were to speak about voice or sound, 'high pitched' and 'low pitched' are opposites,[1058] if about swords or the like 'sharp' and 'blunt' are opposites. On the other hand, there are things that seem opposite though they are not; for example, 'helping friends,' 'harming enemies' seem to be contradictory, though each befits a good man, but in fact it is 'helping friends' and 'harming friends' that are opposites.

* * * * *

those who hold this position. Other heresies, such Montanism, Manicheanism, Catharism, etc forbade or strongly looked down on marriage.

1056 See Erasmus' further discussion of 'likenesses' at 702–15.

1057 For Erasmus' discussion on 'dissimilar ... contrary and contradictory,' see eg Cicero *Topica* 11.47–9; Aristotle *Categories* 10–11 (11b1–14a1), and *Metaphysics* book 5 10 (1018b1).

1058 Erasmus' opposition of Latin *acutus* and *gravis* embodies a range of meanings: 'high pitched, shrill' and 'deep, heavy' respectively. (Translator's note)

Some things are mutually opposed through the removal of a condition, whence they are also called στερητικά [privative].[1059] Of this sort are 'sighted' and 'blind,' 'hearing' and 'deaf,' 'living' and 'dead,' 'light' and 'darkness,' and, if we believe Cicero,[1060] everything that has the privative particle, ἀ [*a*] in Greek, *in* in Latin, such as ἔμπειρος [experienced], ἄπειρος [inexperienced], and *humanus* [humane], *inhumanus* [inhumane].

Some are opposed through relation, such as 'father' and 'son,' 'master' and 'slave,' 'double' and 'single,' 'debtor' 'creditor,' 'borrowing' 'lending.'

Some, on the other hand, are opposed through contradiction, which Cicero calls affirmatives and negatives:[1061] 'It is day,' 'it is not'; 'seeing,' 'not seeing.' Between these there is irreconcilable war, and for that reason Cicero calls them 'intensely contrary.'[1062] For you might find something that you would call neither wise nor foolish, likewise neither dead nor alive, neither father nor son; but you could find nothing that is not either living or not living, white or not white.

Next comes the threefold locus from adjuncts, antecedents, and consequences, in accordance with the threefold division of time;[1063] but since enough has been said about arguments that are derived from time among the accidental qualities of a thing, it is not my plan to burden the reader by repeating them.

Next come incompatibles, which are distinguished from contraries by the fact that they are the logical consequence of a contrary; for example, 'to receive legally' and 'not to receive legally' are contraries, or rather contradictories, but it follows from the former of these that it cannot be taken from someone against his will, from the latter that it can be taken. 'But what has been received in a testament has been received legally and therefore cannot be taken away against someone's will.'[1064]

To incompatibles some join consequents or, as some call them, general contingencies,[1065] so that 'If she is a mother, she does not hate her son' is an incompatible, since it is contrary to basic nature for a mother to hate her son,[1066] just as it is contrary to nature and the servile character for slaves

* * * * *

1059 See Cicero *Topica* 11.48.
1060 Cicero *Topica* 11.48
1061 Cicero *Topica* 11.49
1062 Cicero *Topica* 11.49
1063 Cicero *Topica* 12.53–13.53
1064 Cf Cicero *Topica* 4.21.
1065 Quintilian 5.10.74
1066 See Cicero *De inventione* 1.29.46, 1.46.86.

to bear sincere affection towards their masters.[1067] But 'Someone who loves does not harm knowingly'[1068] is a consequent; for Quintilian adduces this example, though it belongs to incompatibles of the sort 'Someone has not lost what he has not had.'[1069] 'If she is a stepmother, she wishes her stepson ill'[1070] will be from consequents, but this is a single locus: the addition of a negation changes the category.

Next come efficient causes and effects.[1071] From some things one can argue necessarily, from others only probably. If the sun is above the earth, it follows of necessity that it is day; if it is day, it follows of necessity that the sun is above the earth;[1072] and wherever a body is in light, there is shadow, and wherever there is shadow, there is a body in light.[1073] Again, old age brings thoughtfulness, but whoever is an old man is not automatically thoughtful, nor is every thoughtful person an old man.[1074] This locus is akin to the one that is called from consequents. Aristotle relates a locus from generation, which Boethius thinks is the same as efficient cause.[1075] Now, when we argue, 'Evil is the corruption of that whose generation is good,'[1076] we are more truly arguing from contraries than from causes. Themistius includes material, formal, and final cause in this locus.[1077] We have already

* * * * *

1067 Cf Seneca *Epistulae morales* 47. Erasmus departs from the sense of this moral treatise, which argues that slaves 'are not enemies when we acquire them; we make them enemies' (47.5); and, contrary to the Romans' haughtiness, one should 'associate with your slave on kindly, even on affable, terms . . .' (47.13).

1068 Cf Quintilian 5.10.74. Quintilian renders the idea as *Quem quis amat, sciens non laedit*. Erasmus remembers the Latin as *Qui amat non laedit sciens*, which alters the sense somewhat.

1069 Quintilian 5.10.74

1070 Cf *Adagia* I ix 10 *Flere ad novercae tumulum* 'To weep at your stepmother's funeral.'

1071 Cicero *Topica* 4.22 and 14.58–66; cf Quintilian 5.10.75–9.

1072 Quintilian 5.8.7; Aristotle *Topics* 6.4.142a33–142b6; Cicero *De inventione* 1.46.86; Boethius *De diffinitione* PL 64 907C.

1073 Quintilian 5.10.80

1074 Cf Quintilian 5.10.80–2; Aristotle *Topics* 3.2.117a27; cf Erasmus *Adagia* III ix 66 (2866) 'Senum prudentia'; and III x 74 (2974) 'Senum prudentia.'

1075 Cf Aristotle *Topics* 3.2.117b2–4. Chomarat (ASD V-4 423 387n) notes that neither in Boethius' *Interpretatio Topicorum Aristotelis* nor in his *In Ciceronis Topica* is this claim to be found.

1076 Cf Thomas Aquinas *In II sententiarum* dist 37 q 3 a 1 arg 4.

1077 Themistius (317–88), philosopher, statesman, and orator, wrote commentaries on some of Aristotle's works; see OCD 'Themistius' 1053. The first edition of Themistius' *Paraphrases* on Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, *Physics*, *De anima*, and some spurious works attributed to Themistius was translated from Greek

spoken about final cause among the circumstances of person.[1078] Whatever has to be said about formal cause is contained in what we have said about definition and differences of substance.[1079] Matter is that from which something is made or with which something is occupied, for instance, 'From clay is made a pot,' 'From an untrained boy is made a philosopher,' 'Philosophy is occupied with the honourable and dishonourable,' and 'Politics is occupied with the governing of the state.' But it generally happens that everything bears a taste of that from which it was made, such as a pot mud, a man earth; and nurture changes nature, and it is fitting that everyone measure up to that with which his profession is occupied.

Some authorities separate outcomes from effects,[1080] though these too can be subsumed under consequents and antecedents; for example, 'The fact that Scipio defeated Hannibal proves that he was a better general than Hannibal,' and 'The man who has never been shipwrecked is considered a skilled captain,' and 'The man under whose care many have died is considered a bad physician,' and 'The fact that Cato, who they say defended himself forty times, was always acquitted proves that he was charged falsely.'[1081]

Related to cause is occasion, and just as a deed is imputed to the person who provided the cause, so it is frequently imputed to someone who knowingly provided a significant occasion;[1082] and there is good reason to entertain doubt about who sinned more grievously, the one who encouraged a crime or the one who carried it out. Thus many husbands unfairly

* * * * *

into Latin by Ermolao Barbaro and published at Treviso by Bartolomeo Confalonieri and Morello Gerardino in 1481; he later produced an emended translation of Themistius *Paraphrases in Aristotelem* (Venice: Bartholomaeus de Zanis de Portesio 1499). See Robert B. Todd 'Themistius' in *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum: Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries, Annotated Lists and Guides* Virginia Brown, with James Hankins and Robert A. Kaster (Washington, DC 2003) VIII 57–102, especially 72; and Charles H. Lohr 'Renaissance Latin Translations of the Greek Commentaries on Aristotle' in *Humanism and Early Modern Philosophy* ed Jill Kraye and M.W.F. Stone (London 2000) 24–40. For Erasmus' familiarity with this text, see his letter to Willibald Pirckheimer, Ep 1558:255–68 with n27.

1078 See book 2 499 above.

1079 See book 2 648–72 above.

1080 Quintilian 5.10.48; see book 2 634, 641 above.

1081 See Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia* 3.7.7, where he says only that 'the elder Cato was often put on his defence by his enemies but never convicted on any charge'; and Plutarch *Cato the Elder* 15.4. Plutarch says, 'He was defendant in nearly fifty cases . . .'

1082 See Quintilian 5.10.23–31.

engineer a divorce with their wife when they themselves have, so to speak, driven their wife to this point either by adulterous behaviour or by unrestrained debauchery. Here there arises the insoluble question of how it is that neither the prescience nor the will of God compels man to the necessity of sinning in such a way that any evil can be imputed to God himself.[1083]

To these is added comparison,[1084] which is made from an equal, a greater, and a lesser. As has been said, this especially applies in likenesses and examples, of which we have already said something and will say more later,[1085] though it has an even broader application, such as in conjectures: 'If someone dares deceive his father, all the more will he dare deceive others as well,' 'Someone who has committed sacrilege will commit theft as well,'[1086] 'Someone who is not afraid to commit theft will not be afraid to deny theft.' Those are from a greater; this from a lesser: 'Someone who lies easily and openly will commit perjury.'[1087] The argument from a lesser does not have the same force, but it does nevertheless provide some probability because, as the satirist says, 'No one suddenly becomes an utter disgrace,'[1088] rather people advance from slighter to graver vices; for example, we learn perjury from swearing easily and rashly. From an equal will be 'Someone who has taken money for judging an accused will also take it for speaking false testimony.'[1089] It is also useful for the confirmation of a law, which pertains to the status of quality. From a greater: 'If one may kill an adulterer, one may also flog him,' 'If one may kill a thief in the night, why not a bandit?' From an equal: 'A just punishment against a father's slayer is just against a mother's as well.' This treatment pertains to syllogism,[1090] for it is called

* * * * *

1083 Chomarat (ASD V-4 425 411n) sees 'compels man to the necessity of sinning' as the Latin equivalent of 'providing the occasion' (*dare occasionem*). This 'inexplicable question' had been taken up thoroughly not just by Erasmus in *De libero arbitrio, Hyperaspistes 1 & 2* and other places but by St Augustine extensively in *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, *De correptione et gratia*, etc; Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 38 aa 1–4; and Lorenza Valla *De libero arbitrio*, an edition of which was published at Basel in 1518 by Andreas Cratander. See book 3 894.

1084 On 'comparison' (*comparatio*), see Quintilian 5.10.86–94. See also Lausberg §§395–7.

1085 See 477–8, 563, 573, 662–73, 679–80, 702–4 and book 3 777–82, 823–9, 839, 855, 870–9.

1086 Quintilian 5.10.87

1087 Quintilian 5.10.87

1088 Juvenal *Satires* 2.83 (*nemo repente fuit turpissimus*). Erasmus' quotation does not follow exactly Juvenal's wording. Cf John of Salisbury *Policraticus* 2.7.19.

1089 Quintilian 5.10.87

1090 For 'From a greater ... syllogism,' see Quintilian 5.10.88.

ratiocination in status when no definite law has been promulgated on the subject, while we derive our proof in ratiocination[1091] by arguing from other laws; but they will have the same usefulness in matters on which Scripture has nothing to say. Finally, it is effective in both definition and quality: 'If the body's strength is not good, still less is its health,' 'If theft is a crime, sacrilege is more so.' Of these the first is from a greater, the second from a lesser; 'If abstinence is a virtue, so is continence'[1092] is from an equal.

It remains to set out a list and to review each point, adding whatever pertains more especially to the preacher. There are then, in sum, the following loci:

Nonartificial:	Precedents	Oath
	Rumours	Testimonies
	Tortures	Conjecture
	Documents	Oracles

I don't believe anything has to be added to these, since I think I have indicated sufficiently what use the preacher can derive from them.

We've touched briefly on signs that are midway.[1093]

Examples will be discussed in their own place.

Among artificial loci are the accidental qualities:	Of person:	
	Family	Rank
	Nationality	Personality
	Homeland	Pursuits
	Sex	Ambition
	Age	Past actions and
	Education	Past words
	Physical condition	Emotion
	Fortune	Name

* * * * *

1091 See 'ratiocination' above at 614, 673–4. Cicero *De inventione* 1.34.57; and Quintilian 5.10.6 and 3.6.43, 3.6.46, 3.6.61; cf 5.10.88–9.

1092 For 'If the body's ... continence,' see Quintilian 5.10.89. Erasmus reverses the first quotation: 'If strength is good for the body, health is no less good' (5.10.89).

1093 For Erasmus' discussion of nontechnial signs (σημεῖα), which are not constructed by the art of the speaker but arise from the circumstances of the event, see 607–9 above, where he distinguishes signs that are 'midway' (*de signis quae media sunt*) between ones that are necessary, that is, conclusive (τεκμήρια [tokens, signs]), and those not necessary (εἰκότα), that is, 'probable.'

Of thing:
Cause
Place
Time, taken three ways
Chance
Ability
Means
Manner

Nor is it necessary to add anything to these.

I shall append the loci that Cicero and Themistius culled from Aristotle.[1094] They are these:

Definition	Examples
Description	Unlikenesses
Etymology	Inconsistencies
Conjugates	Opposites
Genus	Contraries
Species	Privatives
Differences	Relatives
Property	Contradictories
Division	Incompatibles
Partition	Consequences
Induction	Chance or outcomes
Supposition	Causes
Exordium	Effects
Increment	Generation
Culmination	Corruption
Likenesses	Comparison

We shall run through the order of these with all possible rapidity and accommodate to a preacher's use whatever comes our way, but only after a reminder that using loci is useful not only for proofs but also for teaching. Furthermore, as I began to say earlier,[1095] the word 'teaching' has two meanings, for someone who proves by arguments – which is an orator's chief power – is teaching, and so is someone who imparts a complete knowledge

* * * * *

1094 For the extensive tables of Cicero and of Themistius taken from Aristotle, see Boethius *De differentiis topicis* III PL 64 (1847) 1201–4. See especially Boethius *De topicis differentiis* trans and ann Eleonore Stump (Ithaca c 1978).

1095 See 500 above.

of an art or of anything at all; for example, someone who praises the pursuit of farming is teaching by arguments, and someone who imparts the method of tilling fields or teaches about the offices of justice is teaching, but in another way. The former teaches to persuade, the latter to make you understand. The knowledge of loci pertains to either kind of teaching. We will say a little in passing about the latter kind, with the intention of returning soon to the other kind.

In this kind of argumentation it is definition that holds first place, together with its relatives, description, etymology, and glossing, which explains a less familiar word with a more familiar one. For the first stage in effective learning is to know what the subject is, and what its proper name is; for example, someone who is going to teach about temperance first explains in a definition what temperance is. But if a word has a variety of meanings or is rather obscure or is used in a variety of ways or is ambiguous because it resembles similar names, the obscurity should be eliminated by an explanation; other difficulties should be removed through distinction. Professors of geography distinguish it from cosmography. For example, *evangelium* is on everyone's lips; what a gospel is is not equally familiar to everyone. Next, *evangelium* is used in various ways among the Greeks, sometimes for a reward for good news,[1096] sometimes for a monument erected to commemorate a happy event. Therefore, we must distinguish from these and indicate what the gospel properly speaking means to us – the promise of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ;[1097] and here at the same time stands the difference between the gospel and the Old Law. Similarly, everyone says the Apostles' Creed, but not everyone understands the ways in which this word is employed and what 'creed,' properly speaking, means to us. Similarly, we all say 'Eucharist,' but only scholars of Greek know what 'Eucharist' means. Accordingly, we see that Aristotle, the διδακτικώτατος [most apt at teaching] of all philosophers,[1098] was extremely careful everywhere, but particularly in his ethical treatises,[1099] about explaining and distinguishing the words for things. Unless there is agreement about these, a disputation is blind and almost, as they say, a battle of *andabatae*.[1100] Sometimes it is useful to explain

* * * * *

1096 See eg Homer *Odyssey* 14.152.

1097 See Rom 1:2–5, 16–17.

1098 See 1 Tim 3:2; 2 Tim 2:24.

1099 For Aristotle's 'ethical treatises' (*moralia*), see eg his *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.7 and 8, 3.1 and 5; see also his *Magna moralia* 2.11 where he analyses meanings of the forms of 'friendship.'

1100 *andabatae* were gladiators who fought with helmets having no opening for the

the different names of the same thing, since some are more significant than others. For example, our *usura* [usury] is derived from 'using' and is employed also for things that we use for a time, though 'usury' has a different meaning in the prohibition against lending to a neighbour for usury;[1101] the Greeks call this τόκος, that is, 'giving birth,' because money loaned bears interest to the lender. *Foenus* [interest], moreover, comes from *fero* [to bear];[1102] this word applies more to the earth, which gives back more in the harvest than it received in the sowing. In quite a similar manner *encaenia* is understood by many as meaning just the same as 'dedication.' This Greek word [ἐγκαίνια] comes from beginning or initiating [καινός 'new'],[1103] and in Latin it means 'something is set apart by all rights for a specific purpose'; for example, while we are being initiated and made new in baptism, we are undoubtedly being dedicated to Christ and to his worship. From this the word has been transferred to the consecration of churches when they are devoted to divine worship. But when we say 'baptism,' the Greek word is more familiar than the Latin *tinctura* [tincture]. Either word is ambiguous, for washing or dipping and dyeing, whence the Greeks call a certain plant ἄβαπτος [undipped] because the moisture of water does not cling to it when it is submerged; but when they say βάμμα σαρδονικόν [Sardinian dye], they are referring to colour, whence too they call twice-dipped things δίβαφα [twice-dipped]. Either rationale for the name applies to those who are reborn in the bath, inasmuch as they are washed of their sins in the immersion and are buried together with Christ to live again in the newness of life; and those who previously were Ethiopians black with crimes shuck off the old man,[1104] put on Christ, and robe themselves in the white fleece of the lamb. Thus one knows the rationale of the name through etymology, glossing, description, and definition: what it properly signifies in a given case, and how it differs from kindred terms, and what genus it belongs to, and what form it has by which it is narrowed down from a genus to a particular species, and what property it has.

* * * * *

eyes; see *Adagia* II iv 32; see also eg Cicero *Ad familiares* 7.10.2; and Jerome *Adversus Helvidium* 3 and *Adversus Iovinianum* 1.36.

1101 *usura*, from *utor* 'to use,' means both 'use' and 'usury.' See OLD *usura*. (Translator's note)

1102 Latin *foenus* or *faenus*, here derived from the verb *fero*, 'bear.' See OLD *faenus*. (Translator's note)

1103 From καινός [*kainos*] 'new.' See LSJ καινός. (Translator's note)

1104 L&S notes that 'the Greek geographers derived the word [Aethiops] from αἴθω-ὤψ, and applied it to all the "sunburnt," dark-complexioned races above Egypt.'

Through division, moreover, one knows the species that it contains within it, and the marks by which species differs from species, the accidental qualities by which the same species differs from itself or an individual from an individual. The application of contraries also sheds no little light, for it quite often happens that one contrary is more familiar than another. For example, the opposite of *candidus* [benign] is *malignus* [malign] if you're talking about mental qualities, and the opposite of *candidus* [white] is *niger* [black] if you're talking about external qualities;[1105] but in beverages *lenis* [smooth] is opposite to *acris* [biting], *amarus* [bitter] to *dulcis* [sweet], *austerus* [harsh] to *blandus* [pleasant], and in mental qualities *lenis* [gentle] is opposite to *iracundus* [irascible]. Sometimes a single word is bounded by an opposite on either side; for instance, the opposites to *frugalitas* [frugality] are *luxus* [luxury] and *sordes* [avarice], to *liberalitas* [liberality] *profusio* [wastefulness] and *avaricia* [stinginess].

But in order to avoid becoming too prolix by mentioning every point in this way, I shall demonstrate with a single example how many loci apply to the same thought, and provide to the wise man an opportunity for becoming wiser. Let baptism be chosen for this purpose. If you should ask its genus, it is the first of the seven sacraments of the New Law. If you ask its genus more exactly, it is one of those sacraments that cannot be repeated once they have been conferred properly. Let its difference be the power, through faith in Christ, of washing away free all sins of whatever sort. Its property could seem that it is unrepeatable, had more recent theologians not determined that this is also shared with certain others in which they determine an indelible character, for example in confirmation, last anointing,[1106] and ordination, seizing upon some words of Augustine (I am not disputing at this time whether they have been understood correctly).[1107] We have

* * * * *

1105 *candidus* means 'gleaming white,' but is also applied to those having mental qualities like honesty, good will, and 'candour.' (Translator's note)

1106 Erasmus seems confused about the sacrament of last anointing (*unctio suprema*). Until the Council of Florence in 1439, the sacrament of last anointing (extreme unction) was considered as conferring an indelible character upon the recipient; however, in the *Bulla unionis Armeniorum* (22 November 1439) the council declared there were only three sacraments of this kind (baptism, confirmation, holy orders). See Tanner I 541–2: 'Three of the sacraments, namely baptism, confirmation, and orders imprint indelibly on the soul a character, that is a kind of stamp which distinguishes it from the rest. Hence they are not repeated in the same person. The other four, however, do not imprint a character and can be repeated' (542).

1107 Augustine *De baptismo* 6.1.1 CSEL 51 143–375, NPNF 1st series 4 411–514, and Ep

already spoken of the double interpretation of the name. From the genus, the difference, and the property the definition is constituted. It is divided, moreover, according to accidental properties into three kinds, into baptism of blood, of river, and of spirit,[1108] though it can also be divided differently according to accidental property, so that there is one that is given to the dying, whom they used to call 'bedridden'[1109] in jest; into sprinkling, whence they were commonly called 'sprinkled' rather than 'baptized'; into the baptism of infants and adults. If you were to examine the causes, the end is eternal life. The matter is water and the word, unless you prefer to call these means. The matter on which the power of the sacrament acts is the soul of man; the form is the action of the Holy Spirit. The efficient cause is the Holy Trinity, for a priest or someone else who baptizes is only a living instrument or minister. The effect is innocence given free through faith, or a man reborn. The exordium is the perception of the elements of faith, the increment the perception of more recondite learning, the culmination is perfection in evangelical devotion. Among the antecedents is repentance of one's past life, among the adjuncts or adjacents full trust regarding Christ's promises. Among the consequents is the advancement of an innocent life. The generation and corruption is 'Because the old man dies, a new one arises.'[1110] A similitude is 'Just as those who revolted against God perished in the Red Sea and the Hebrews escaped uninjured, so in baptism the sinner is slain and the innocent rises up.'[1111] A dissimilitude is 'All wrongdoings will not be washed away through the sacrament of penitence without the natron and tears of contrition, in the way that in baptism all sins, even original, are remitted free without avowal, even if there is no contrition.' Moreover, many likenesses and unlikenesses can be adapted to the same thing. An analogy would be 'Baptism provides in the New Law what circumcision provided to infants in the Old Law.' A comparison: 'Which is more effective, baptism for us or circumcision for the Jews?' and 'Could the sacrament of penitence have the same power as that of baptism?' The consequents are a less intense

* * * * *

98.5 CSEL 34.2 526–7, NPNF 1st series 1 408. See also Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* III q 63 a 1–6.

1108 Cf 1 John 5:6–8. Martyrdom is often referred to as 'baptism of blood.' Erasmus' words in Latin read *in baptismum sanguinis, fluminis et flaminis*; he renders πνεῦμα as *flamen* 'wind, blowing' rather than using the traditional word 'spirit' (*spiritus*).

1109 See Cyprian Ep 69.13.1 CSEL 3.2 762–3.

1110 Rom 6:6; Eph 4:22; Col 3:9

1111 See Exod 14:22–9.

love of the earthly, more powerful aspirations towards the heavenly, and other things of this sort. The incompatibles are that someone who has sworn loyalty to Christ as his commander soldiers for the world and serves Satan. It will be possible to draw an argument from chance or outcome thus: 'The proof that baptism is not a merely human affair is that all nations have long been seeking it with such zeal, and that even supreme monarchs are not ashamed to be candidates for it.' Countless comparisons can be adduced: 'If a soldier carries out his commander's orders for scant recompense even to the point of losing his life, how much more should we obey our leader Christ, who promises eternal life in heaven in exchange for a brief and easy service.' The conjugates will be 'It is fair that whoever becomes a soldier of Christ should soldier in good faith beneath his standards.' The contrary is to be Satan's slave; baptism provides a great service by restoring us from this slavery to the freedom of God's children.[1112] An example of privation will be 'If a mind stained by crimes is a detestable thing, baptism should be sought because it creates an unstained mind within us.' A contradiction would be 'If whoever has been baptized with faith is a child of God, whoever has not been baptized is not a child of God.' A relation would be 'If someone who has been baptized rightly calls God "father," it is fair that he should play the obedient son to him' or 'If you have become a child of God, that father of the wicked must be abjured.' I think that I have indicated just about all the loci in the one example.

Yet a teacher is not content with these, but seeks out from everywhere whatever assists knowledge of something, for example from antecedent time the ways in which a man should be prepared for baptism, from present time the observances and rituals with which priests ought to administer this sacrament, and the reverence with which one fittingly receives the catechumen. Next he must come to the things that preserve and increase the grace of baptism, on the other hand to the things that corrupt it or make it invalid; and here the field of ineffective or unapproved baptisms opens up, such as the baptisms of the pagans that, as the poet says, washed away the night with a river,[1113] likewise about the washings of the Pharisees, who used to wash their body when they returned from the market,[1114] but at home promptly scrubbed their cups and copper vessels (even today the Jews have their

* * * * *

1112 Cf Rom 8:21.

1113 Persius *Satire* 2.16: 'Is it that you may put up prayers like these with all due piety that you dip your head every morning twice and three times in the Tiber, washing off in his waters all the pollutions of the night?'

1114 See Mark 7:3–4.

sabbath baths). Here the locus comes up about what John's baptism provided,[1115] likewise about baptisms not completed properly, about the baptisms by heretics,[1116] again about anabaptisms, a plague now troubling the church,[1117] and about the opinion of certain persons who think that baptism is not necessary for salvation but is only an honorific sign of adoption,[1118] likewise whether another person's faith is sufficient for the salvation of infants.[1119] Sometimes one must speak about both the duty of godparents and

* * * * *

1115 See Matt 3:11–16; Luke 3:16; John 1:25–6.

1116 Erasmus likely is referring to the controversy on rebaptism that occurred in North Africa in the third and fourth centuries. Cyprian of Carthage and other North African bishops held that schismatics and those who had apostatized (*lapsi*) in the persecutions undergo baptism a second time to be readmitted to communion with the church. The position was rejected in the West, though in the East the church rebaptized persons whose baptism had been conferred by heretics. See J. Patout Burns 'On Rebaptism: Social Organization in the Third Century Church' *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 1 (1993) 367–403; ODCC 150–3.

1117 The word 'anabaptism' in Greek means 'rebaptism' and refers here to the many sects of the Reformation that required a 'rebaptism' in the Spirit. Anabaptists found themselves severely persecuted everywhere by secular and church authorities whether in Catholic or Protestant lands. For Erasmus' views of the Anabaptists, see: Ep 1369:41–50 (to Cuthbert Tunstall, June 1523); Ep 2134:224–42 (to Alfonso Fonseca, 25 March 1529). For the possible influence of Erasmus on Menno Simons and the Anabaptists, see Abraham Friesen *Erasmus, the Anabaptists, and the Great Commission* (Grand Rapids, Mich 1998) chapter 2 (Erasmus and the Anabaptists) 20–42. See also CWE 76 143 n256. See also 'Anabaptists' *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation* 1 31–5; George Huntston Williams *The Radical Reformation* 3rd ed (Kirksville, Mo c 1992); *Radical Reformation Studies: Essays presented to James M. Stayer* ed Werner O. Packull and Geoffrey L. Dipple (Aldershot 1999); *Anabaptism Revisited: Essays on Anabaptist/Mennonite Studies in Honor of C.J. Dyck* ed Walter Klaassen (Waterloo, Ont c 1992).

1118 On 'honorific sign of adoption,' cf Rom 8:23; Gal 4:5; Eph 1:5. See Ep 1369:41–50 (to Cuthbert Tunstall, June 1523). Some sects, too, regarded the use of material objects, whether water, bread, wine, oil, etc in spiritual activities as only symbolic and not essential to the rites. Other groups, such as the Manichees and Cathars, were outright hostile to the use of any matter in their rituals, as it was evil and contrary to the Spirit.

1119 The practice of infant baptism necessitated that someone (godfather or godmother, sponsor) stand in for the child and affirm what it would say if it had the use of reason. Erasmus himself did not object to the practice of infant baptism; see Peter Bietenholtz "Conclusion" in *Encounters with a Radical Erasmus: Erasmus' Work as a Source of Radical Thought in Early Modern Europe* (Toronto 2009) 230–4; and Payne (2) 155–78, especially 177–8, where he notes that 'Erasmus never, as far as I can judge, opposed the practice. Rather, he expressly

how this custom has come down to our time, in addition about the faults of those who minister the sacrament of baptism, about the faults and negligence of godparents, about the guilt of those whose bad living turns the grace of baptism into an increase of damnation or who receive baptism under pretence or without faith, and then what the remedy is for these ills. He will adduce internal and external baptism, a consideration that applies in almost everything that a preacher treats.[1120] The more recondite something is, the more excellent it is and the more effective. For example, in a man the soul is more excellent than the body, and each power of the soul is the more excellent as it is most removed from the external senses: among the external, one's touch is the crudest sense, hearing and vision are more excellent; of the internal ones, the most divine is understanding or mind, since it is the one most pure from corporeal matter.[1121] In general, nothing is more hidden and less exposed to the senses than God himself, since nothing is greater or better.

There is a certain method of teaching that advances through stages derived straight from the origins of a thing.[1122] For instance, someone who intends to speak about religion and the worship of divinity will be able to begin from the fact that religion is so natural that clear traces of it are detected even in brute animals, such as in elephants,[1123] and that no nation has been found so savage and wild that it is not influenced by some religion. Genesis reveals the nature of early worship in relating the sacrifice of Abel

* * * * *

said that it should be retained as one which has come down from the ancient authority of the Church' (177).

1120 Erasmus goes to the crux of the preacher's task, which is to teach the spiritual richness of the sacrament, which is expressed in external signs.

1121 Erasmus conceives of an ontological hierarchical arrangement moving in continuum from base matter to absolute spirit, God, with each element along the continuum assigned a higher or lower value depending on its relation of spirit to matter. In this scheme, the mind (*mens*), being spiritually purer, exceeds the memory and imagination; hearing and vision, which are gateways to the soul, exceed touch, taste, and smell. Cf *Enchiridion* CWE 66 47–55 and Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* book 1 passim.

1122 Erasmus demonstrates below the value and method of teaching a subject chronologically and how this can help the preacher. See Erasmus' discussion of 'exordium, increment, and culmination' where he applies this idea to the teaching of Christianity, monasticism, the origin of dedicating churches, etc 661–2 below. The method of teaching 'through stages' (*per gradus*) was common in the ancient world; see eg Quintilian 8.4.3–9; Ambrose *Exameron* (*Six Days of Creation*) 1.7.27 FOC 42 29.

1123 Pliny *Naturalis historia* 8.1.3

and Cain.[1124] Since they did not have knowledge of the true God, the superstition of the heathen degenerated into various rituals, some even of astounding absurdity; to call the Israelite people back from these, Moses prescribed set ceremonies for worshipping God, in the tabernacle at first,[1125] until that magnificent temple was built in Jerusalem whose worship, because it consisted of shadows,[1126] gradually gave way to the gleaming light of evangelical devotion.[1127] Moreover, although the truth of the gospel is unmovable, nevertheless many innovations have been made with the progress of time, some also in accordance with national differences, for right up to the present day there are different forms of worship among the Greeks, among the Indians, among the Romans. Someone who wants to present the whole nature of a subject will run through stages of this sort. Similarly, on the topic of confession he will say what it was under natural law, what among the pagans (for among them too a confession of crimes was demanded of initiates), what under Moses' law, what in the beginnings of the growing church, what today. Whoever undertakes the office of teaching considers these things and many others.

Moreover, although this type of learning is more useful to those who write books or teach in the schools, nevertheless it would profit the preacher to be trained in this too even if he does not use it; yet it sometimes happens that he does use it, for instance, when he must explain to a congregation what usury is and what contracts come to resemble usury.[1128] Moreover, it happens more frequently with those who are expounding in a sustained and continuous presentation some such theme as the Decalogue or the Apostles' Creed. He must say what the church is and in what ways it is understood, what faith is, and likewise about the rest. Similarly, when he deals with marriage, with prayers, with swearing oaths, he will also bring forward their origins and what things are akin to these or contrary or conducive or harmful, just as physicians when discussing good health do not consider it sufficient to indicate what good health is but what either preserves or corrupts it. It is Aristotelian to propound first the general sense of something and its heads, so to speak, then to add what belongs to a more precise knowledge by returning along the same traces to the individual parts, following the

* * * * *

1124 Gen 4:3–4
1125 See Exodus 26–7 and 36.
1126 Cf Heb 10:1.
1127 See 1 Kings 6–8.
1128 Erasmus often touches on the subject of usury; see 449, 583, 591–2, 602, 630, 677 above.

example of artisans who first create a rough outline of a statue, then return again and again to its individual limbs until they impose the final touch.

And so, after this brief exposition, I return to the series of loci. I believe that enough has been said, at least as far as pertains to the preacher, about definition, which is especially necessary to theologians, and likewise about genus and species, difference, and property. For every schoolboy is aware that a definition is exchanged with the word defined both in attributing and in removing, just as difference and property are with species, and that a genus moreover is truly predicated of individual parts and whatever is embraced under them, not the other way: for example, whatever is man is animal as well, but whatever is animal is not automatically man. This relation is turned differently in subtracting: for example, whatever is not animal is not man, but what is not man is not automatically not animal. Moreover, whatever has a proximate genus predicated of it has superior ones predicated of it as well: for instance, whatever is justice is also virtue, condition, and quality. Here it is necessary to warn against being deceived by homonyms and words with more than one meaning. When we call a robe 'candid' and a soul 'candid,' the first 'candid' has colour as its proximate genus, the latter condition, yet either is contained under the genus of quality. Likewise, when we speak of a sea dog and a land dog and a dog as a star,[1129] the first two words differ in species, though they agree in referring to an animal, while the third agrees neither with a fish nor with an animal that barks; it is only corporeal substance, although there have been those who have thought that stars are animal.[1130] And I am not certain whether all the things that are predicated of God and of creation are not of a different genus, such as when God is said to repent, hate, love, be angry, pity.[1131] Similarly, the varied use of a word often clouds the understanding, the way that Paul uses the words law, flesh, spirit in a variety of senses.[1132]

* * * * *

1129 See Pliny *Naturalis historia* 9.55.110. Sea dogs (*canis marinus*) protect seashells in deep waters against robbers of their treasurers; Aelian *De natura animalium* 1.55 discusses three types of sea dogs. The 'star as dog' or 'Dog Star' is Sirius.

1130 In the sense 'endowed with breath,' derived from Latin *anima*. (Translator's note)

1131 These expressions are frequent throughout the Psalms, prophets, and poetic books of the Old Testament; see eg Deut 32:16–42. See book 3 895, 896, 940, 955, 1026.

1132 Erasmus gives extensive attention to these theological terms; see book 3 passim; see also *Annotationes in epistolam ad Romanos* CWE 56 183–290; and *Enchiridion* CWE 66 75–80. See also Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 1.24.24–5 and J.B. Payne 'Toward the Hermeneutics of Erasmus' *Scrinium* II 13–49.

Partition removes a whole by removing its principal parts,[1133] assembles a whole by attributing them; for example, 'Someone who has given neither roof nor walls nor foundation has equally not given a house; someone who has given these has given a house'; likewise, 'Someone who has neither a body of human appearance nor a mind endowed with reason is not a man'; again, 'Someone who has the body of a man and the mind of a beast, is a beast, not a man,' for the paramount part[1134] of a man is the mind.

Division supplies fuller matter for argumentation,[1135] for when all the forms are removed, the genus is removed as well; for example, 'Where there is not monarchy or democracy or aristocracy or oligarchy, there is no city,' and likewise, 'If God neither moves in place nor is generated nor is corrupted nor is altered, it is clear that he does not move at all.' Here one must beware of leaving out any part or species whose presentation causes the reasoning to become unravelled, perhaps even provoking laughter. Learned men have criticized the paradox of Theophrastus,[1136] I think it was, when he urged against marriage – 'If you wed a beautiful woman, you will share her with others; if an ugly one, you will have a nuisance' – because beauty, which is neither repugnant to a husband nor exposed to general concupiscence, is situated in the middle.

Sometimes the falseness of an adversary's whole assumption is established with two propositions; for example, 'Supposing that he is a Roman citizen, he must either have been born one or made one; but since he was neither born nor made one, on what grounds does he proclaim himself a citizen?' The same thing is sometimes accomplished by proposing several parts, as is clear in the example above, as likewise in the one reported by Cicero: 'If he was made free neither by enumeration in the census nor by emancipation nor by a will, he is not free.'[1137] Here the argumentation collapses if a fourth way should be adduced by which someone becomes free.

Sometimes, if two or more propositions are presented, the single true one will be left when the rest are removed; for example, 'This slave that you claim for yourself is either born in your household or bought or given or

* * * * *

1133 On 'partition,' see 647, 660–1 above.

1134 This is one of the rare instances where Erasmus uses the phrase 'paramount part' (*praecipua pars*) in a context other than speaking of preaching, the bishop's principal or paramount duty (*praecipuum munus*). See also book 2 697 ('especially Jerome' [*praecipue Hieronymus*]).

1135 On 'division,' see 647, 660–1.

1136 See Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 5.11. The saying (5.11.2) is actually that of Bias in the author's discussion of convertible and nonconvertible syllogisms.

1137 Cicero *Topica* 2.10

left in a will or captured from an enemy or someone else's.' By removing the earlier ones it will be proved that he is someone else's.

A third method is when there are two mutually contrary propositions and what we are striving to prove or urge follows whichever one you choose; for example, 'Someone who can bear agony will lie under torture, someone who cannot will lie,' and again, 'What is the point if the figure of speech is understood, what if it is not understood?' Whichever you concede, it follows from the first argumentation that torture is not to be trusted, from the second that figures are not to be used, because it lacks the charm of novelty if it is understood, while if it is not understood, there is no point in saying something that is not understood. Likewise, 'If you are conscious of your crimes, why are you pleasant to yourself and savage towards others? If you are not conscious, reflect that whatever has befallen a man can befall you'; it is inferred from either one that those who sin should be corrected with considerable moderation. There is a well-known remark by King Antigonus;[1138] when his brother sought to have his litigation with someone tried at home rather than in court, he refused with the paradox, 'If you have an unjust case, why are you litigating? If a just one, why do you shun the public and the conscience of men?' Again, 'What astrologers say is either true or false or ambiguous. If ambiguous, it is just as if they were saying nothing; if false, it is an indignity to be tricked by a lie; if true, what they say is either happy or sad: if happy, you will be troubled by hope, and the outcome will lose the charm of novelty, but if sad, you will be prematurely unhappy, and the trouble will be doubled, for fear is often worse than the trouble itself' – it follows, therefore, that foreknowledge of the future is harmful.[1139] Likewise, 'If he is not a friend, it is foolish to entrust a secret to him; if he is a friend, remember that he can become an enemy' – it follows that a secret should be entrusted to no one.

There are closely similar forms in which, with two or more propositions, we choose from each what is convenient for us; for example, 'If he is a good man, let us attribute it to virtue; if he is bad, let us attribute it to the man,' and likewise, 'Letters should be learned above all, for they

* * * * *

1138 Cf Plutarch *Moralia* 182.9C and Erasmus *Apophthegmata* CWE 37 369. The quotation attributed to Antigonus is Erasmus' own paraphrase of the vignette in Plutarch. Vespasiano da Bisticci relates virtually the same comment made to Cosimo de' Medici by Archbishop Antonino of Florence; see *Renaissance Princes, Popes and Prelates. The Vespasiano Memoirs: Lives of Illustrious Men of the xvth Century* trans W.G. Waters and Emily Waters, introduction by Myron P. Gilmore (New York 1963) 57–63.

1139 Cf Cicero *De divinatione* 2.9.22: 'Of a surety, then, ignorance of future ills is more profitable than the knowledge of them.'

will be a solace in adversity, an ornament in prosperity; they will bring an honourable pleasure in private life, in a magistracy they will provide sound counsels; they will win honourable repute for youth, authority for old age.'

Sometimes two propositions are presented, of which one is preferable: 'If you do not litigate, you lose money; if you litigate, you lose peace of mind, but the loss of money is less serious.'

There is the flawed paradox, which the Greeks call *ἀντίστροφον* [turning against] because it turns both horns against the adversary, like the famous example of Euathlus.[1140] When he had arranged with Corax to pay his fee after he had mastered rhetoric, he made the following propositions when called into court. He asked Corax what was the purpose of the skill. When he had received the answer, 'To persuade by speaking,' he said, 'Corax, I'll give you nothing. For if I persuade the judges, I owe nothing according to the judges' opinion; if I do not persuade them, I owe nothing according to our agreement, since I have not yet achieved the purpose of the skill.' Corax gave a partial retort: 'No, if you win this case, you will owe according to our agreement; if you are defeated, you owe according to the judges' opinion.'

To this sort belong what they call sorites,[1141] crocodilites,[1142] and *pseudomenos* [liars' paradox].[1143] For a sorites infers by the removal of parts; for instance, 'A single coin does not make a man rich; therefore no one will ever become rich by the acquisition of a coin,' and for instance, 'A single day does not make an old man, therefore no one will become an old man.'

* * * * *

1140 In his discussion of the early origins of the art of rhetoric, Quintilian mentions Eualthus as one who paid the large sum of 10,000 denarii for the textbook of Protagoras of Abdera (3.1.10). In *Brutus* (12.46) Cicero states that Aristotle gives the names of the Sicilians Corax and Tisias as the first to 'put together some theoretical precepts . . . a definite method or art.' For the dilemma Erasmus recounts here, see Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 5.10.2; but it is Protagoras and Eualthus, not Corax, who become involved in the dispute (*ἀντιστρέφον*), sometimes called a 'convertible argument' (Latin *reciproca*), since it can be turned around by the opponent to better advantage. Erasmus' rendering of this story differs somewhat from Aulus Gellius' version.

1141 'Sorites' (Greek *σωρός*) 'heap'; 'The original form of this fallacy began with the question, "Does one grain make a heap?"' Cicero notes that the word *acervalis* could be used for *sorites*; see Cicero *De divinatione* 2.4.11 and *De finibus* 4.18.50.

1142 'Crocodilites' (from Latin *crocodilus*) 'crocodile'; the example below appears in Lucian *Vitarum auctio* 22 and Quintilian 5.10.5.

1143 See LSJ '*ὁ Ψευδόμενος*, *The Liar*, the name of a fallacy or logical puzzle invented by Eubulides, a disciple of Euclides of Megara, Theophrastus at Diogenes Laertius 2.108, cf Chrysippus *Stoic.* 2.92 (*Ψευδόμενος* is an interpolation in *ὁ σοφιστικὸς λόγος Ψ*.)'

In Latin you could call this kind of syllogism *acervalis* [heaped up].[1144] A *pseudomenos*, or 'lying,' is one in which what is said will be false whichever one you select. 'Epimenides, himself a Cretan, says that Cretans are liars. If Cretans are not liars, Epimenides has lied; if he has told the truth, it is false that Cretans are liars, since the one who said it is a Cretan.' But this sort of argumentation does not stand up unless you take an indefinite proposition for a universal, for it is both false that all Cretans are liars and true that some Cretans are liars. The crocodilite belongs to the same sort. The name has been bestowed from a fiction of the dialecticians. A crocodile had seized a woman's son, and the crocodile replied as follows to her entreaties: 'I shall give him back if you answer the truth. Tell me then: will I give him back or not?' 'You will not give him back,' she said, 'and therefore you will give him back because I have told the truth.' 'But if I give him back, you have not told the truth, and therefore I shall not give him back.' But these are the sophisms of Chrysippus,[1145] games for children, though not without charm.[1146]

To the class of antistropha belongs what the Greeks call βίαιον [violent] (in Latin you could call it *violentum*), whenever an argument is hurled back at the adversary just like someone seizing a weapon shot by an enemy and sending it back at him. The preacher will be able to use this both often and seriously, especially in refutation.[1147] There is a very apt example in the Gospel: when a servant charges his master with severity, the master responds, 'Then you should all the more have loaned my money for usury, since you knew that I was a severe man and eager for profit.'[1148]

There comes to mind here something not unamusing that I once heard from Thomas More, who was a youth at the time but now is the most talented man of all those that England has had for many centuries.[1149] King Henry VII had proposed an exceptional taxation under the pretence of a

* * * * *

1144 *acervalis* (from the Latin *acervus* 'heap'); the Greek equivalent is σωρός 'heap' and σωρείτης; hence *sorites*. See L&S: 'Used by Cicero in dialectic language for the Greek σωρείτης, sophism by accumulation, *De divinatione* 2.4.11.' See Cicero *Academica* II 15.46–33.107.

1145 Cicero *Academica* 2.30.96: 'These fallacies are the inventions of Chrysippus, and even he himself could not solve them . . .'

1146 Quintilian 1.10.5 observes that it is important for even the best of orators to be familiar with these '"horn" or "crocodile" problems . . . because it is important that he should never trip even in the smallest trifles.'

1147 Erasmus refers to an important duty in preaching, refuting heretics; see 543, 567, 585, 587, 610, 613.

1148 See Luke 19:22–3.

1149 For Erasmus and Thomas More, see CEBR II 456–9; see also J.B. Trapp *Erasmus, Colet, and More: The Early Tudor Humanists and Their Books* (London 1991).

loan. Richard, bishop of Winchester, surnamed Foxe,[1150] who was no fool, conducted his prince's affairs with the clergy. The priests, for their part, were trying to give as little as possible, and they had a twofold strategy for accomplishing this. Some came magnificently dressed so as not to seem to possess ready cash (for splendid attire exhausts wealth), but others came squalidly attired. Each group gave the same excuse, but the bishop turned the argument back against each. 'That very splendid garb of yours,' he said, 'shows that *you* do not lack money,' and 'The fact that *you* are dressed so wretchedly shows that you are saving your money.' But it was nature, not rhetorical theory, that gave him this.

Plutarch similarly reversed a saying of Alexander the Great.[1151] When he had returned from a conversation with Diogenes, and his friends were surprised that he had paid the filthy Cynic this respect, he said, 'In fact, if I were not Alexander, I should wish to be Diogenes,' but he should have wanted all the more to be Diogenes because he *was* Alexander. The same reply could be given today to certain people who affirm that philosophy is neither fitting nor useful for a prince; in fact there is no one whom philosophy more befits or helps than a prince, since his duty is to care for so many thousands of people and his heart bears so many storms of troubles.[1152]

As an incitement towards pleasures, Horace often uses the justification that human life is both brief and uncertain.[1153] In fact, this is all the less reason why some part of life should be wasted in luxury; rather it should be devoted entirely to virtue precisely because it is brief and uncertain.

Someone admired the audacity of a singer on the grounds that he made music his profession despite his ignorance of the art; someone else turned this into a compliment on the grounds that, being who he was, he preferred to make his living by singing rather than by robbery.

* * * * *

1150 Richard Foxe (1448?–1528). See 'Richard Foxe' CEBR II 46–9 and 'Foxe, Richard' ODCC 627.

1151 Plutarch *Alexander* 14.3

1152 Erasmus provides a carefully designed syllabus for princes, whose titles include many fundamental works of moral philosophy and the wisdom books of Scripture: the proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, the Book of Wisdom, the Gospels, the *Apophthegms*, *Moralia*, and *Vitae* of Plutarch, the writings of Seneca, the *Politics* of Aristotle, *De officiis* and *De legibus* of Cicero (the *De re publica* at this time was known only through the quotations of it by other authors), and the equivalent works of Plato on moral philosophy. Erasmus recommends some writers of history, but with the caution that the reader be 'forearmed' against many of their 'destructive ideas' and that they be read 'selectively.' See *Institutio principis christiani* CWE 27 251 and CWE 28 522 n32.

1153 See eg Horace *Odes* 1.4, 1.9, 1.11 (*carpe diem*); see 'Carpe Diem' in *Classical Tradition* 169–70.

Someone reproached Cato the Elder with the fact that he had had to defend himself forty times in court;[1154] this can be turned back into a compliment to the man: 'Outstanding virtue has always been hateful to the majority of people, because few are good, and like takes joy in like.' Again, there is a way available of turning it back: 'In fact, Cato's remarkable honesty is proved by the fact that, though accused so many times, he was always acquitted by the judges' votes.'

And to present something from my own experience: a friend, when I asked him why he was building so splendidly, said, 'To show my rivals that I have no lack of money.' 'In fact,' I said, 'this is the way to show that you do lack money.' But this was a joke.

I shall add something else of a serious nature. When I was in Rome, someone with a not very good opinion of the dogmas of the Christian faith had shown his fellow buffoons chapter 55 of book 7 in Pliny,[1155] where that pathetic man mocks those who thought that human souls survive death unlike those of animals. I was summoned, since I was present in the same conclave, chatting with someone else; I came. I was asked whether I had anything with which to refute so great an authority. I replied that there was nothing that confirmed me more strongly in believing in the immortality of souls than that very chapter, which was the most stupid and ignorant thing in that author. He thinks it terribly absurd for someone to believe that man breathes differently than frogs or asses; then he says that some animals are longer lived than man, though no one has attributed immortality to them. In addition, he asks how souls think, see, hear, taste, smell, touch when released from their bodies, and he thinks that nothing good is left if these are absent. And – the most thickheaded thing of all – he is bothered about where all these thousands of souls reside. But there is no more plausible way of winning your case than when your opponent cuts his throat with his own sword.[1156]

* * * * *

1154 See 672 above.

1155 Pliny *Naturalis historia* 7.55.188–90.

1156 See *Adagia* I i 51 *Suo sibi hunc iugulo gladio, suo telo* 'I am cutting his throat with his own sword, with his own weapon.' Erasmus does not explain how to refute Pliny's arguments or how Pliny 'cuts his throat with his own sword.' But this incident seems to have touched a sensitive spot with Erasmus and recalls the vigorous discussion on the question of the immortality of the soul in the Renaissance, and perhaps Erasmus' somewhat negative view of Aristotle's teaching on the soul, and Aristotle's view as propounded by Pietro Pomponazzi; see eg Erasmus' comments in book 3 797, 1010, 1024, and book 4 1040. Most likely Erasmus knew of Pomponazzi's *De immortalitate animae* (1516) and appears to allude to it in Ep 916:323–45 (to Erard de la Marck, Louvain, 5 February 1519) and in *Colloquia* (*Puerpera* [1526]) CWE 39 590–618,

In contraries one must note what I touched upon before, that things that seem at first glance to be contraries are not always so in fact, whether in individual words or in clauses. For example, *acutus* [high pitched] and *gravis* [heavy] are opposites,[1157] but only so long as you are talking about words or sounds; if about solid bodies, the opposite of *acutus* [sharp] is *obtusus* [blunt], of *gravis* [heavy] *levis* [light]. And the false is not always the opposite of the true, but sometimes the true denotes perfection and eminence; for instance, when a father says about a very obliging son, 'This is my true son,' he does not mean that the others are false but rather that this one is exceptional. Nor is truth always the opposite of falsehood. 'The Law has shadows, the gospel truth':[1158] yet there was no falsehood in the Law, but rather shining truth in the gospel. Nathanael was called a 'true Israelite,'[1159] but this does not mean that the others were Israelites falsely; rather he was pre-eminently one, since

* * * * *

where Eutrapelus gives instruction on the soul from Aristotle's *De anima*. See also session 8 (19 December 1513) of the Fifth Lateran Council, which had just condemned 'the pernicious error' 'on the nature of the rational soul, with the claim that it is mortal, or only one among all human beings . . .'; the council 'condemns and rejects all those who insist that the intellectual soul is mortal, or that it is only one among all human beings, and those who suggest doubts on this topic. For the soul not only truly exists of itself and essentially as the form of the human body . . . but it is also immortal; and further, for the enormous number of bodies into which it is infused individually, it can and ought to be and is multiplied' (Tanner I 605). For more on this question see Paul Richard Blum 'The Immortality of the Soul' in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Philosophy* (Cambridge 2007) 211–33, especially 222–3, where the author takes up Pomponazzi's responses to 'a series of moral and cosmological objections by referring to a variety of religious and literary sources,' and where Pomponazzi 'declared the question of the immortality of the soul to be, in technical terms, as "neutral" (*neutrum problema*) as that of the eternity of the world, i.e. insoluble and irrelevant to religious faith.' In effect, Pomponazzi 'technically violated the key motivation of the Lateran Council for prohibiting the teaching of arguments for the mortality of the soul' and in his teaching, however subtle, 'somehow undermined rational certainty and severed it from faith.' Blum notes the strong reactions to Pomponazzi from his former student Gasparo Contarini, Bartolomeo Spina, Ambrogio Fiandino, who invokes Erasmus and many others in the defence of the immortality of the soul, and Agostino Nifo. For challenges to the idea of immortality as raised by those in the tradition of Democritus, Epicurus, and Lucretius, see Alison Brown *The Return of Lucretius to Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge, Mass 2010) and Stephen Greenblatt *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern* (New York 2011). See also 'Immortality of the Soul' in *Classical Tradition* 475–8.

1157 See Erasmus' discussion of this, 669 above.

1158 Cf Heb 10:1 and Gal 2:5, 2:14; Col 1:5.

1159 John 1:47

he recalled the patriarch Jacob in both lineage and character.[1160] And the Lord said of himself, 'I am the true vine'[1161] because he alone gave of himself to his members what a vine's root and stem gives to its shoots; this is how the Lord is called a true vine when compared to a natural vine.[1162] Again, a vine growing in a field is called a true one when compared to Christ because it is called that without a figure of speech, and Christ is not for that reason a false vine. The true God is the one who created the universe, yet those of whom 'I have said, "You are gods"'[1163] was written are not gods falsely, rather the rationale of the appellation has been altered. Similarly, 'sole' does not always exclude a companion but sometimes signifies eminence, just as we call 'singular' and 'unique' not what is 'sole' but what is outstanding.

St Augustine, vexed at words of this sort, inverted the order of the Lord's words, but rather harshly in my opinion: 'That they might know you, Father, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent, as the only true God.'[1164] But in so doing the Holy Spirit is excluded alongside them, if 'only' excludes associates, and the Holy Spirit will not be true God if 'true' is always the opposite of 'false.' I am not unaware that this passage is expounded correctly by

* * * * *

1160 This exegesis is peculiar to Erasmus; for a plausible explanation of this reading, see Chomarat ASD V-4 443 844n.

1161 John 15:1

1162 See John 15:4–5.

1163 Ps 82:6 (Vulg 81:6); John 10:34

1164 *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 17.3; cf *Sancti Aurelii Augustini in Iohannis evangelium tractatus* CXXIV CCSL 36 604. The Vulgate reads: *ut cognoscant te, solum Deum verum, et quem misisti, Iesum Christum*. Augustine reorders the words to read: *ut te et quem misisti Iesum Christum cognoscant solum verum Deum*. Erasmus blames the liberty Augustine takes with this passage in making Jesus affirm his divinity with the Father, because at the same time he appears to exclude the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. Erasmus, however, understands that Augustine is seeking to include the Holy Spirit, for Augustine goes on to say: 'Consequenter enim et Spiritus sanctus intellegitur, quia Spiritus est Patris et Filii, tamquam caritas substantialis et consubstantialis amborum. Quoniam non duo dii Pater et Filius, nec tres dii Pater et Filius et Spiritus sanctus, sed ipsa Trinitas unus solus verus Deus. Nec idem tamen Pater qui Filius, nec idem Filius qui Pater, nec idem Spiritus sanctus qui Pater et Filius, quoniam tres sunt Pater et Filius et Spiritus sanctus, sed ipsa Trinitas unus est Deus.' Augustine's reordering of the passage could be used to refute Arians contesting the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son. Erasmus objects to Augustine's reordering, which he sees as unnecessary, if the word 'true' is not used in an exclusive sense to mean that only the Father is true God, and the Son and the Spirit are somehow less than the Father.

the orthodox in such a way that it does not support the Arians without the change of order introduced by Augustine, namely that 'only' and 'true' do not exclude the Son and the Holy Spirit but rather the gods of the gentiles, for Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God and are the only and true God. Yet the passage can have its Catholic sense in another way too if the first person is called the only true God, for the Father is the only Father and the only true God because only he is the source of deity[1165] and does not have his godhood from another, as the Son and Holy Spirit do; and therefore the most perfect principle of beginning, which the word 'true' designates there, exists only in the Father, and yet inequality of nature does not follow from this eminence of the Father.[1166] I should like this said on the understanding that it was not said should the church not approve.

Enough about individual words.

In clauses, this will be an example: 'It is fitting to help friends, harm enemies.' They seem opposite because they are comprised of opposite words, but in fact they are not opposites because each one, in Aristotle's opinion,[1167] applies to a good man; but helping friends and harming friends are in fact opposites.

In the other loci there is no great need to add anything, and an opportunity will present itself later if there is.

In general the preacher should be advised to accommodate these loci to a broader use than do the dialecticians, whose examples are generally quite pedantic. For it is no great matter if we convince someone that what is not an animal is not a man; but he will use the opportunity of this locus to remove from the designation 'man' all those who are driven by base desires into every kind of crime instead of being governed by right reason. He will say that they are more brutish than the dumb beasts themselves, for the latter live in moderation according to their own nature, while these people are impelled towards the unnatural. There is a witty anecdote about Diogenes, who climbed a platform in the marketplace and shouted, 'Listen, men! Listen, men!' When a crowded throng had assembled and demanded that he state what he wanted, saying that those he had called were there, he said, 'I see a mob, not men.'[1168] He also used to stroll through the market with a lantern burning at midday, like a man looking for something. When asked what he was looking for, he said, 'I'm looking for

* * * * *

1165 See book 4 1056.
1166 For Erasmus' comments on Arianism, see book 2 606–7, 634.
1167 Aristotle *Topics* 2.7 (113a)
1168 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* (*Diogenes*) 6.2.32

a man,'[1169] believing that in such a crowded mob there was no one worthy of the name of man. There is a familiar story of Socrates; when a youth approached him saying, 'My father told me to meet you so that you could see me,' he said, 'Speak then, so that I may see you,'[1170] believing that the true man is the one within that is not seen with the eyes of the body but is reflected in speech as if in a mirror. Similarly, he will say that the title of nobility does not belong to those who commit shameful deeds, since true nobility is honourable repute won by virtue. He will say that those who soldier for Satan, who have sold themselves to Mammon[1171] and Venus and other vices, are not freeborn but serve the foulest and most wretched servitude, since true freedom is having peace with God.[1172] He will say that those who are wealthy in external and perishable things that they either do not use on account of their avarice or misuse disgracefully on account of their wickedness are not rich. He will say that those who embrace false images of good as true good are not sound. He will say that those who have their mind befouled though their body is untouched are not virgins, since true virginity is purity of body and mind alike. He will say that where there is not chaste modesty and religious affection there is no marriage but only a more intemperate pursuit of pleasure than is found in animals devoid of reason.[1173] He will say that those who are not driven by the spirit of Christ, though wetted by baptism, are not Christians. He will say that this is no life, prey to so many misfortunes, but only a race towards death. He will say that someone who holds a state for his own benefit is no prince. He will say that someone who considers nothing sacred but his own anointed fingers and shaved head is no priest. Countless examples of this sort can be adduced, but the preacher will gather from these how much material for speaking definition provides. The dialectician adduces but one idea: the defined is predicated of the same thing of which the definition is predicated, and vice versa; but the preacher will find numerous ideas around each locus.

Not only will it contribute to description to have it fit the thing described, but it will lay its whole appearance before the eyes in a sort of portrait in order to impel the spectator either towards love, if an image of virtue is being described, or towards hate, if a vice is being depicted, for

* * * * *

1169 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* (*Diogenes*) 6.2.41; *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 304. See also *Apophthegmata* CWE 37 279.

1170 Apuleius *Florida* 2.1–2 in *The Apologia and Florida of Apuleius of Madaura* trans H.E. Butler (Oxford 1909) 160.

1171 'Mammon' meaning here money; cf Matt 6:24; Luke 16:13.

1172 See *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 113–15.

1173 For Erasmus on marriage, see *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 203–438.

instance, if someone should describe what a remarkable animal a true and φερώνυμος [well-named][1174] monk is, or how foul a thing luxury is.

Now, a word's etymology, though it has not much weight in legal cases, nevertheless comports considerable usefulness for persuasion, praise, and exhortation. According to some, *homo* [man] is derived from the Greek word ὁμοῦ [together], and so there are no men where there is not mutual affection and friendly association. The church is called a *congregatio* [congregation] or *contio* [assembly], which comes together to hear the word of God;[1175] hence where there is no time for sacred learning, where there are discordant minds, there is no church. 'Heretic' is taken from αἱρέομαι 'I choose,' because he would rather follow what he has chosen by his own understanding than what the church has handed down through Scripture. A 'schismatic' is taken from σχίζειν, that is, from cutting; therefore whoever sows discord among those well joined like the members of a single body is a schismatic. A *theologus* [theologian] has his name from the fact that he speaks about God,[1176] and so those who harp on nothing but philosophers and sophisms are not theologians.

In the Gospel the Lord uses a definition to refute the arrogance of the Jews who boasted that they were the children of Abraham, saying that the true children of Abraham were not those who descended in the flesh from his stock but those who imitated his faith and devotion.[1177] He restrains the boldness of his own followers in like manner, saying that his true kin are not those who were connected to him by closeness of blood only, but that those who obeyed the will of the heavenly Father were indeed truly his brothers and sisters.[1178] He calls the wicked Jews the children of the devil,[1179] who resemble him in their deeds by maligning an innocent and trying to kill a benefactor.[1180] In quite a similar manner St Paul casts down the arrogance of the Jews, declaring that it is not only the Jews who are the children of Abraham but all men who have embraced evangelical faith in accordance with his example, that is, who believed in God's promises through his son Jesus Christ; that the true Jews are those who have been circumcised in the

* * * * *

1174 Aelian uses the word 'well named' (φερώμενος) in *De natura animalium* 17.8; where he speaks of the Keros, an animal of many colours living on the shores of the Red Sea.

1175 The church (*ecclesia*) is called a 'congregation' (*congregatio*) or 'assembly' (*concio*). Erasmus discusses this in book 1 249–52; see also introduction 121–2.

1176 From θεός [*theos*] 'god' and λέγω [*legô*] 'speak.' (Translator's note)

1177 John 8:33–40; see *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 115–121.

1178 Matt 12:46–50

1179 John 8:44

1180 John 8:37

mind, not the foreskin; that the true Israelites are those who emulated the gentleness and devotion of the patriarch Jacob.[1181]

Let the definition be: 'A hypocrite is someone who feigns holiness.' The description is when the Lord paints them with his own colours: 'They spread out their phylacteries,'[1182] 'they pray in the corners of the squares'[1183] profusely, and by this sham 'they devour the houses of widows, they disfigure their faces,'[1184] they give alms announced by a trumpet,[1185] then they wash not only their bodies but also their plates, chairs, and vessels.[1186] Paul describes false apostles likewise: 'This sort do not serve our Lord Jesus but serve their own belly and seduce the hearts of the innocent through sweet words and flattering words,'[1187] and elsewhere, 'Enemies of Christ's cross, whose end is death, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in the confusion of those who have earthly thoughts.'[1188]

The angel's interpretation to the Virgin of Jesus' name is derived from etymology,[1189] likewise what the Lord says to Peter: 'You are Cephas, and upon this rock I shall build my church,'[1190] 'A house that will never collapse should only be founded upon stone; you are a stone – upon you, therefore.' From the same locus comes Paul's use of the term 'pseudapostles'[1191] rather than 'apostles' for those who were thrusting themselves into the title of that office, though they were neither sent by the Lord nor did Christ's work but served their own interests, for 'apostle' means 'sent' or 'delegated.'[1192]

You see, reader, what abundant resources for speaking[1193] are provided by definition together with its related loci. But the treatment of etymology

* * * * *

1181 Rom 4:11–25
1182 Matt 23:5
1183 Matt 6:5
1184 Mark 12:41–4; Matt 6:16
1185 Matt 6:2
1186 Mark 7:4
1187 Rom 16:18
1188 Phil 3:19
1189 Matt 1:21. 'Jesus,' a late form of the name 'Joshua,' means '"Yahweh is salvation" according to popular etymology'; see JBC 2 67.
1190 Matt 16:18
1191 2 Cor 11:13
1192 'Apostle,' from ἀποστέλλω 'send away.' (Translator's note)
1193 'Abundant resources for speaking' (*non parcam dicendi copiam*): Erasmus reiterates a fundamental concern in educating the preacher, demonstrating how the application of the principles of classical oratory and dialectic gives the preacher an 'abundance' (*copia*) of things to say when preaching. See eg the introduction CWE 67 167, 188–91.

will sometimes tell the preacher how to explain an idiom or an emphasis[1194] of words, as the Doctors of the church often do, especially Jerome. Paul's use of 'profit'[1195] for 'building,'[1196] 'harming'[1197] for 'destroying'[1198] is an idiom; his use of the term 'witchcraft'[1199] for the deceptive persuasion that had led the Galatians to Judaism is an example of emphasis.

The genus and the whole will remind him to exhort in such a way that we lift our minds from these well-grounded and individual things that are exposed to the senses to those things that are always the same way and are perceived by reason, not by sense, all the way up to that immense source and author of everything in whom are the eternal exemplars of all things.[1200] This procedure will expand the narrowness of our mind, which is contracted and cast down by the contemplation of individual things. It is quite sublime to contemplate this entire world as though it were a single city over which

* * * * *

1194 For 'emphasis,' see book 3 727, 787–8, 827, 863–4, and Chomarat *Grammaire* II 803–15.

1195 For 'profit,' see eg 1 Cor 7:35, 12:7, 14:6; Phil 3:7.

1196 Cf 1 Cor 8:1; 2 Cor 10:8: 'For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it.' See also 2 Cor 13:10: 'the authority the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down.'

1197 Cf 1 Cor 11:17.

1198 Cf Rom 14:15, 20; 1 Cor 3:17; Gal 1:13, 23.

1199 For 'witchcraft' (*fascinatio*), see Gal 3:1: 'You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched [*fascinavit*; *τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν*] you?' See *Paraphrasis in Galatas* CWE 42 107–8 and 164 n1; *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* LB VI 811E–F. For ideas of witchcraft, bewitchment, and malign influence in Paul's use of the verb, see LSJ *βασκαίνω*.

1200 For the idea of the ascent of the Christian to God in whom are the 'eternal exemplars of all things,' see especially *Enchiridion* Rules 5 and 6 CWE 66 83–5. Erasmus reveals here, as elsewhere in *Ecclesiastes*, the dynamic of the spiritual life that moves the heart and soul from the sensible world upwards to the realm of spirit and ideas, 'the eternal exemplars of all things,' similar to the Neoplatonic ascent to the One, Augustine and Monica's vision at Ostia (*Confessions* 9.10), Bonaventure's *Itinerarium mentis in deum*, and many other works of Christian spirituality. Erasmus describes the mysticism of certain individuals, like St Benedict, who once envisioned the whole world as a single ball; see Gregory the Great (Pope Gregory I), *Dialogues* 2.35 FOC 39 104–5. See also Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.30.72 and *De republica* 6.9.9–6.26.29 ('The Dream of Scipio'), which tie together so many of Erasmus' themes in *Ecclesiastes*. Erasmus would have known of the dream of Scipio through Macrobius' commentary; see Ep 61:147n and Ep 121:5; and Plato *Republic*, where Socrates, concluding the dialogue, relates the vision of the bold warrior Er after his return to life from the world beyond (*Republic* 614B–621D).

God presides as monarch, that the whole church is a single body[1201] or single family, which does not know how to perish. To keep from being too lengthy, one must speak of the rest in a comparable manner.

And the preacher will not consider it enough to say that 'being capable of reason' is the difference of a man, or that 'capable of laughing' is a property of a man, and that someone who is incapable of reason or who is not able to laugh is therefore not a man; rather he will look higher and say that true men are those who are governed, through faith in Christ Jesus, by the spirit of God rather than by reason, that it is proper for a man to recognize his creator and to be capable of being taught evangelical teaching.

In any kind of argument it will be helpful to weigh carefully the exordium, increment, and culmination. The exordium of the human race was in paradise, its increment under the threefold law of nature, of Moses, and of the gospel, its culmination the end of the world. Likewise of lesser things. The exordium of piety is hating sin, its increment advancement in faith and charity, its culmination perfection. Likewise, the exordium of Christianity is in baptism, its increment in the piety of one's life, its culmination in death. In vices, on the other hand, the exordium is a lapse through thoughtlessness, the increment progress towards worse behaviour, the culmination a mind hardened towards evil and delivered to base thought. Thus the monastic way of life had its exordium from the prophets who lived in the desert off the food that lay to hand,[1202] and its increment came from those who occupied solitary places, first the Thebaid, then others, until it reached its present culmination. The same consideration can roam through all the species of things, such as the origin of observing feast days, the origin of dedicating churches, the origin of confession as a sacrament, the origin of the rank of bishops,

* * * * *

1201 Cf 1 Corinthians 12.

1202 See eg 1 & 2 Kings for the life of the prophet Elijah the Tishbite who was directed by God to live near the river Cherith and was fed by ravens. John the Baptist lived in the desert (Luke 3), and St Antony (251–356) embraced the solitary life, as described in Athanasius' *Vita Antonii*. The Thebaid was the region on the Nile around the city of Thebes; there in the fourth and fifth centuries large gatherings of men and women embraced the 'solitary' life, others gathered to live the communal life. See Philip Rousseau *Pachomius: The Making of a Community in Fourth-Century Egypt* (Berkeley 1985); Derwas J. Chitty *The Desert a City: An Introduction to the Study of Egyptian and Palestinian Monasticism under the Christian Empire* (Oxford 1966); C.H. Lawrence *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages* (London 1984).

the origin of the Roman pontiff's primacy,[1203] in the same way that Plato demonstrates the first origin of the state,[1204] the origin of princely power, and lawyers demonstrate the origin of slavery and the steps by which it reached the written civil code.[1205] This locus is useful not only for knowing thoroughly the nature of any thing at all but also for magnifying praise whenever something has advanced from a base or modest start to an outstanding state, and for enhancing an accusation whenever something has advanced from slight and praiseworthy beginnings to the greatest iniquity.

From slight and moderate beginnings arose the impost, taxation, and tribute of monarchs; how far this has now advanced will be understood more correctly by someone who has read decrees older than a hundred and twenty years. It arose from good beginnings, the fact that a prince or his representative seizes property found in a thief's possession or that an admiral siezes a ship and goods left over from a wreck, for that was the intention of the regulation that things were to be restored to their proper owner by public authority. Bureaus of finance were instituted so that whatever bandits had snatched from a traveller could be claimed under the prince's protection; now there is no end of employees in these bureaus, with no protection from them and considerable trouble, and they are so far from restoring property to those robbed that they themselves sometimes seize goods contrary to all law and demand taxation from those from whom the prince forbids demanding it.[1206] A prince's seizure of a stranger's property was justly established at any rate so that it might reach the legitimate heirs and not be plundered by others; but I leave the secular and return to the sacred.

* * * * *

1203 The *Ecclesiastes* speaks reservedly of the papal office. Erasmus' mention here of the primacy of the Roman papacy suggests his belief in the validity of this papal prerogative. His attitude here contrasts sharply with earlier expressions, eg *Julius exclusus* (CWE 27 155–204), where he pointedly suggests that the papacy, or more specifically certain popes, have 'advanced from slight and praiseworthy beginnings to the greatest iniquity.' For Erasmus' view on the primacy of the Roman popes, see *Colloquia* (*A Fish Diet* / Ἰχθυοφαγία) CWE 40 675–762 n98 (734). See also 594 n647.

1204 Plato *Republic* 2.369B–371E, 8.562A–569C, 544D.

1205 See *Pandects* book 1, title II, 'On the Origin of Law.' Erasmus was hostile to the institution of slavery; see eg *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 328: 'How good it would be to see the wretched concept of slavery cast out entirely from Christian society!'

1206 Erasmus is likely recalling the confiscation of his savings by royal customs officers at Dover on 27 January 1500; see Erasmus' letter to Johann von Botzheim, Ep 1341A:582–617; CWE 9 315 n130; and Ep 119 introduction and 9n.

The dedication of churches has come down to us from the Jews and pagans alike, but among us it has reached such a point that it is little short of superstition. With what superstitious rituals are church bells consecrated, exorcised, catechised, given names, given godfathers and godmothers, baptized, anointed, told to respond with a peal.[1207] And not only do they call forth the congregation – the use for which they were originally adopted – but they greet the bishop when he returns from abroad, clang against the thunder, in some places jingle entire days, obstruct divine worship with their booms, obstruct the preacher. In some cases they so fill everything with their Corybantic racket[1208] that they not only increase the illness of the ailing but even drive sane men to madness or to epilepsy. Why should I mention now the consecration of vessels, stones, and linens?[1209] There was no need to imitate Moses in ceremonies of this kind.[1210] And those things are not done without expense: but the bishops' chief source of revenue is from suffrages.[1211] At one time churches received nothing but the voice of the reader or teacher; then singing crept in, but a simple kind, quite similar to the manner of the speaking voice, which did not obscure the words but fixed them more effectively in the minds of the audience. Now the business has reached a point where churches ring with horns, pipes, trumpets, and even bombards, and hardly anything is heard but the varied chattering of voices and a type of music so

* * * * *

1207 For the consecration, ringing, and symbolism of church bells, see Durandus (Guillaume Durand) *Rationale divinorum officiorum* CCSL 140 (books 1–4), 140A (books 5–6), 140B (books 7–8); *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments: A Translation of the First Book of the 'Rationale divinorum officiorum,'* with an introductory essay, notes, and illustrations by John Mason Neale and Benjamin Webb (Leeds 1843; repr New York 1973) 87–97.

1208 The phrase 'Corybantic racket' is taken from the Greek word Corybant (Greek Κορύβας), a priest of Cybele in Phrygia. See *Adagia* III vii 39 Κορυβαντιᾶν 'To be a Corybant.' Corybants were noted for their loud frenzies in Cybele's rites; see Strabo 10.3.7; Diodorus Siculus *Biblioteca historica* 5.49.3; Lucian *Saltatio* 8; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.49.62.

1209 For the vast number and varieties of blessings (water, wine, salt, bread, oil, crops, fruits, herbs, etc) available to clergy in the Middle Ages, see Adolph Franz *Die kirchlichen Benediktionen im Mittelalter* 2 vols (Graz 1960).

1210 See Exodus 25–8.

1211 'Suffrages' (in ecclesiastical Latin: 'aid, support, means of life'); a suffragan bishop was a full-time assistant bishop who received his principal support from the 'aid' or 'support' or 'the means of life' given him for performing various rites in the diocese. Erasmus suggests why these kinds of ceremonies of consecration proliferated. See ODCC 1554–5 'suffragan bishop.'

effortful and sensual that the theatres of the pagans never had anything like it.[1212]

The same thing occurs in the case of papal indulgences.[1213] In the beginning, a few days were remitted from the penitence prescribed by the church, and only for a pious and worthy reason, such as when it was necessary for a basilica to be constructed. The remission was agreeable and the profit not disagreeable. Once the basilica was constructed, the remissions began to be annual. Here the popes restricted the licence to prevent the church's discipline from becoming loose, but the practice gradually became a flood, so that a longer span of time was remitted for even the most trivial causes, even for no cause, if even a stipendiary bishop waved his hand. Finally, remissions were extended all the way to purgatory. The profit from this is now quite substantial, and the people have been convinced by false prophets[1214] that, with a coin tossed into a red box,[1215] all their stains have been wiped away and that it lies within the pope's hands to deliver into heaven from the fire of purgatory the souls he chooses or as many as he chooses. It is sufficient to have indicated the method by a few examples, so that the careful reader may examine others in its light.

From division[1216] is drawn those words of Isaiah,[1217] 'If I am your Lord, where is your fear of me? If your father, where is your love of me?'[1218] It is a dilemma: whichever one you grant, it is inferred that they are delinquent, though there is another underlying locus here, from incompatibles and consequents. Christ used a dilemma to shut the mouths of the Pharisees, asking whether John's baptism was from God or from men. They felt the horns of the dilemma: 'If we say "from God," he will immediately object, "Why

* * * * *

1212 For Erasmus' views on music, see J.-C Margolin *Erasme et la musique* (Paris 1965); and *Lingua* CWE 29 286 n8; *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* 14, LB VI 731F–732B n26. See especially the detailed note in *Colloquia* (*Peregrinatio religionis ergo*) CWE 40 669 n161. I thank Margaret Liggett for her help on this question.

1213 Erasmus' comments on indulgences echo those of *Moria* CWE 27 114. See also Allen Ep 2205:76–84 (to John Botzheim, 13 August 1529) and Allen Ep 2285:86–114 (to John Rinck, 17 March 1530).

1214 Cf Matt 24:11, 24.

1215 One is reminded of John Tetzel preaching the indulgence in 1517: 'As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, / The soul from purgatory springs.' Quoted by Roland Bainton *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (New York c 1950) 78.

1216 For Erasmus' treatment of division, see above at 537–51.

1217 As Chomarat observes (ASD IV-4 453 45n), the following quotation in fact comes from Mal 1:6, but I have not followed him in altering the text. (Translator's note)

1218 Mal 1:6. Erasmus mistakenly gives Isaiah as author of this biblical verse.

then do you not believe him when he bears witness about me?" If we say "from men," we will stir up the mob against us.'[1219] Of the same sort is: 'Is it permitted to help on the sabbath or to harm?'[1220] They fell silent; had they said 'harm,' no one would have tolerated the impious reply, if 'help,' the very charge they were making against him was one of helping. Again, 'If I cast out demons through Beelzebub, his kingdom will collapse if a demon is casting out demons. But if I cast out demons by God's finger, assuredly the kingdom of God has come upon you';[1221] whichever you grant, it follows that the kingdom of God is at hand. Paul's phrase, 'For me Christ is life and death gain,'[1222] belongs to the category of dilemma. Whichever should happen, he reaps a reward: 'If I live, I am doing Christ's business; if I die, I am called to my crown.'

Now, induction is not properly a locus distinct from the others but is a specific method of treating likenesses and examples;[1223] if a considerable number of these are not adduced to elicit assent, there will be no induction, just as supposition[1224] is also not a locus distinct in kind from the rest but a method of arguing in which we pretend that what did not happen happened. Similarly, comparison[1225] too is not a locus by itself but is applied in treating likenesses and examples, and so nothing prevents there being a similitude, an example, an induction, and a comparison in the same argumentation, as in this example: 'If an ass or mule had struck you with its hoof, would you strike back? Hardly. If an infant had thrust its nails in your face, would you respond in kind? Not at all. What if a drunken man had addressed you insultingly, would you give way or fight? Of course you would give way. What if a fool or madman punched you, would you strike back? I think not. But someone stirred up by violent anger has less intelligence than an ass or a mule or an infant or a drunk or a fool or a madman.'[1226] One could treat in a similar manner the locus found in Paul at 1 Corinthians 9,[1227] where he proves the same thing with the various likenesses of a soldier, a vineyard worker, a shepherd, an ox threshing, a ploughman, an

* * * * *

1219 Matt 21:25–6; Mark 11:30–3; Luke 20:4–6
1220 Cf Matt 12:10–14; Mark 2:23–8.
1221 Matt 12:26–8
1222 Phil 1:21. See *Paraphrasis in Philippenses* CWE 43 366.
1223 See above 472 for Erasmus'discussion of induction; see also above at 614, 663, 675. For 'likenesses and examples,' see *De copia* CWE 24 608–24.
1224 For 'supposition,' see above at 586, 592–3, 662, 665, 675.
1225 For 'comparison,' see 477–680 passim above.
1226 Cf Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* 2.5.21 (Socrates).
1227 1 Cor 9:7–14

attendant at a shrine or altar, and, as he adds elsewhere, a labourer.[1228] If Paul should transfer these to his own person, it will be a supposition; for they are all possible, with perhaps the exception of the ox, though the farmer that drives the ox also lives from the grain that he threshes. The comparison too, which is now understood, can also be explained: 'If we soldiered for you on a foreign campaign, would you not give us pay? As it is, it is not houses or fields but your souls that we are protecting with spiritual weapons. If we were your vineyard workers and were planting a vineyard, you would allow us to share in the fruits; as it is, we are planting in you Christ, who is the true vine[1229] that pours forth the wine of the spirit. If we were hired shepherds, you would deem it fair for us to be fed from the milk of your flock; as it is, it is not your sheep but your souls that we are feeding with heavenly food. If the Law forbids binding the mouth of an ox while it is being driven in threshing,[1230] how much less appropriate is it for our mouths to be bound when we are threshing for you the good seed of evangelical teaching, which Christ has sown. If we were your tenant farmers and were ploughing your fields, you would undoubtedly allow us to be nourished from the produce of your fields; as it is, we are preparing your hearts with the word of the gospel to receive the seed whose yield bestows eternal life.[1231] If we were slaughtering or cooking your victims in a temple of stone, you would judge it fair for us to take our sustenance from the victims in accordance with the Law's instruction;[1232] as it is, we as Christ's priests are making your hearts temples of the Holy Spirit,[1233] you yourselves sacrificial victims agreeable and pleasing to the living God.[1234] If we were workmen hired by you to construct a wall or villa, would you not count out our reward in accordance with our work? As it is, we are endeavouring to make you into spiritual homes for Jesus Christ to inhabit through grace. If pagans accord similar justice to pagans, how much more fitting is it for Christians to do the same? But if we are fighting for you in greater danger than any soldier, if with greater effort and earnestness than any tenant farmer or craftsman, if what is provided by our labour is so much more outstanding that there is no comparison, if what we receive

* * * * *

1228 1 Tim 5:18
1229 Cf John 15:1–5.
1230 Deut 25:4; 1 Cor 9:9–10; 1 Tim 5:18
1231 Cf Matthew 13.
1232 Deut 18:3; cf 1 Cor 9:13.
1233 1 Cor 3:16–19, 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21
1234 Cf Rom 12:1.

is less than what they receive (for apart from moderate and simple sustenance, and even that for but a day, we require nothing, while they often even grow wealthy), are we not dealing with you on very fair terms?' In the same argumentation you see likenesses, an induction, a supposition, and a comparison, the basis of them all being a similitude. Though I have made this point in rather verbose fashion, it should not prove a nuisance to the serious reader, for it helps in digging out the wealth that Scripture contains hidden within it and that must be put before the eyes of the uninstructed congregation.

Among similitudes the greatest is the one by which the Son is said to be like the Father,[1235] then how man is said to have been created in God's likeness[1236] and how he is shaped to his image through grace, next how the image in which man was created has been corrupted and how some, by living badly, take on the image of Satan instead of the image of Christ. When we love a devout man, what we love in him is precisely this image; likewise, when we hate the wicked, we should hate only the image of Satan. But although nothing is properly said to be like God according to his whole nature, yet some faint shadows, as it were, are found, especially in what God works in his creatures. God is eternal; and the spiritual man meditates upon the eternal. God is the highest of all; and a pious man neglects the lowly and mentally passes his time in heaven. God is shared by all; likewise, the perfected man strives to serve all. God is immense; and his spirit magnifies the hearts of the devout. God is free from all evil; the devout mind struggles towards this image with all its power. God can be harmed by no one nor is there any damnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.[1237] God is all-powerful; Paul too can do all things in him by whom he is strengthened.[1238] God is the Lord of all; Paul too writes to the devout, 'All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or the present, or the future; all are yours, and you are Christ's.'[1239] You are hearing of a wealth more than royal. A philosopher cleverly deduced that good men are friends of the gods, that friends, moreover, share everything, that the gods in turn have everything good, and that therefore good men lack

* * * * *

1235 Ie from the article of the Nicean Creed that states that Jesus Christ is 'of the same substance' (Greek *ὁμοούσιος*; Latin *consubstantialis*) as the Father (DS 150). See Erasmus *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 231–392, especially 285–7.

1236 Gen 1:26

1237 Rom 8:1

1238 Phil 4:13

1239 1 Cor 3:22–4

nothing good;[1240] this fits much more correctly those who have become one with God through faith in Christ.[1241] No change or disturbance affects God; the devout man, who is neither elated by success nor dejected by troubles, practises constant mental peace.[1242] God is immortal; and the devout man contemplates immortality, not only in his mind but in his body as well, since most physical corruption derives from faults of the mind. Not to take up any more time, I leave it to the reader to work out the rest in this way. Because of these slender similitudes, everything that is said about God is said by way of metaphor: sun, life, lion, farmer, etc; on the other hand, because nothing in creation is truly like him, everything is denied about him.[1243] The same opinion should be held regarding analogies. What God is in the universe a prince is in his kingdom, a father in his household, a bishop in his church, the mind in the body. But a similitude or an analogy does not have to fit in every respect; it is enough for it to agree in the area where it is being applied.

A similitude is remarkably effective for persuasion but does not have so much force in making a case; hence we must beware of deceiving with, or of being deceived by, a false impression from a similitude, for some use this image to assert sacramental confession.[1244] A judge pronounces upon a case only when he has heard all the circumstances of the case: a priest takes the

* * * * *

1240 See *Adagia* I i 1 *Amicorum communia omnia* 'Between friends all is common.'

1241 Cf Rom 5:1–2 and Gal 2:16–21.

1242 Erasmus' ideal Christian who possesses 'mental peace' (*mentis tranquillitas*) is much like the ancient sage who throughout adversity and prosperity keeps his mind at peace, in whom *ratio* rules the perfectly obedient body. See eg Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 2.22.51–3. And for the idea that 'most physical corruption derives from faults of the mind,' see also 3.3.5–3.4.9 for Cicero's discussion of the diseases of the soul (*morbi animi*), *aegritudo* 'depression,' *cupiditas*, *perturbationes animi*, etc; and 3.7.14–3.8.18, 3.10.23–3.11.25, 4.4.7–4.38.84. See 721–2, 705 below.

1243 Erasmus describes here the philosophical *via negativa* and apophatic mystical approach to knowing God, which while affirming metaphors indicating in some small way what God is like, eg, as 'Father,' 'Life Giver,' or 'Sun,' must deny the metaphor itself, affirming all the while that God is not that but infinitely other and greater. The apophatic mystic in the end passes beyond words and metaphors to union with God. See Andrew Louth 'Apophatic and Cataphatic Theology' in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Mysticism* ed Amy Hollywood and Patricia Z. Beckman (Cambridge 2012) 137–46; see also his *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition from Plato to Denys* (Oxford 1981); and ODCC 88 'apophatic theology.'

1244 See the pertinent comments of Rodolphus Agricola on the use of arguments drawn from the topic of similitude in Peter Mack *Renaissance Argument: Valla and Agricola in the Traditions of Rhetoric and Dialectic* (Leiden 1993) 163–4.

role of a judge, and the person confessing plays the two contradictory roles of the guilty party and the accuser; but all the while there is no advocate. In addition, an accused who confesses is condemned in the law courts, but here he is acquitted. Besides, someone who confers baptism absolves of all sins although they are unknown; then if a priest absolves only of known sins, those that the person confessing has forgotten or does not know therefore remain unremitted, not to mention that the priest, however well he knows the case, is uncertain whether he has absolved or not since he does not know whether true contrition is present. For the contrite, however, it is likely that the sins have been forgiven before they confess; a priest only confirms God's gift and puts a kind of seal upon it. By the same reasoning they demonstrate the justice of satisfaction: a prince grants a document of pardon, imposes reparation, and thus no one is to be absolved unless satisfaction has been imposed. But God's clemency is infinitely more generous than man's, and Christ imposes no satisfaction when he says to the paralytic, 'Son, your sins are forgiven,'[1245] likewise when he says to the woman who sinned, 'Your sins are forgiven, go in peace,'[1246] and again when he says to the adulteress, 'Go and sin no more.'[1247] In mentioning this, I am not condemning satisfaction but disputing the effectiveness of the argument for it.[1248] As well, one must avoid similitudes that are false or obscure or uncertain.[1249] An example of a false one would be: 'Just as even the sources of great rivers are navigable, so the natural excellence of great talents immediately produces perfection,' for it is false that any sources are navigable. Those about mind, love, and knowledge, about understanding, will, and memory that some adduce to prove one being in three persons can seem obscure;[1250] the one that Origen

* * * * *

1245 Matt 9:2
1246 Luke 7:48–50
1247 John 8:11
1248 For 'reparation' and other questions of the sacrament of penance, see *Exomologesis* CWE 67 68 above.
1249 Quintilian states that the simile (*similitudo*) 'can provide Ornament for a speech, and make it sublime, colourful, attractive, or striking. The more remote the source of the Simile, the more novelty it produces and the more unexpected it is . . .' But he cautions against false similes and their improper use (8.3.74–6) with the example of the 'sources of great rivers,' which Erasmus gives here, and 'A cutting from a choice tree bears fruit from the start.'
1250 Erasmus is likely referring to some of St Augustine's sermons and *De Trinitate* (4.21.30–1, 14.8.11, 15.20.39), which use analogies such as the intellect, will, and memory, the three powers of the human soul, each distinct yet all existing as one, as a pale analogical reflection of God's triune nature ('an image of that highest Trinity'): 'And as, when I name my memory, and intellect, and will,

adduces about the sun, its rays, and its heat is clearer.[1251] Of the same sort is the one adduced from the triangle using mathematics, and pretty much all that are drawn from numerical subtleties; these make no impression upon the untrained masses.

The most beautiful and perfect of all examples has been produced for us in Christ Jesus. The closer that someone approaches to this model, the more he is to be imitated. Closest to Christ approach the examples of the apostles and the martyrs, who strengthened the church in its birth and childhood and supplied to a degree what was missing from Christ's sufferings,[1252] though there are some examples of evangelical perfection even in the Old Law; but one should particularly use examples that have been commended to us in sacred writings. Furthermore, since unequal examples have more power whether for proof or for persuasion or for exhortation or argument, all examples drawn from Christ are, in general, unequal in

* * * * *

each name refers to each severally, but yet each is uttered by all three; for there is no one of these three names that is not uttered by both my memory and my intellect and my will together [by the soul as a whole]; so the Trinity together wrought both the voice of the Father, and the flesh of the Son, and the dove of the Holy Spirit, while each of these things is referred severally to each person. And by this similitude it is in some degree discernible, that the Trinity, which is inseparable in itself, is manifested separably by the appearance of the visible creature; and that the operation of the Trinity is also inseparable in each severally of those things which are said to pertain properly to the manifesting of either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit' (4.21.30). See also *Sermo de symbolo* PL 40 (1865) 1195 chapter XI: 'Trinitatis mysterium per similitudines explicatur ... Sol, candor et calor, et tria sunt vocabula, et tria unum. Quod candet, hoc calet, et quod calet, hoc candet: tria haec vocabula, res una cognoscitur. Ita Pater et Filius et Spiritus sanctus, tres personae in deitate unum sunt, et individua unitas recte creditur. Item de terrenis, vena, fons, fluvius; tria haec vocabula, et tria unum in sua natura: ita trium personarum Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti substantia et deitas unum est ...'

1251 See Origen *De principiis* 1.1.6 and 1.2.11.

1252 See Col 1:24: 'What is lacking in the sufferings of Christ, I complete in my flesh for his body which is the Church'; and Erasmus *Annotationes in epistolam ad Colossenses* in Reeve and Screech 636, where he reviews comments on the passage from Ambrose, Theophylactus, Chrysostom, and the Latin scholiast. Note Joseph A. Grassi's comment in JBC II 338: 'Exegetes are not agreed as to how Paul, as a member of the Church, helps to complete the sufferings of Christ.' The author seeks to explain the meaning of Paul's words in the wider context of preaching the gospel. See also Edward Lohse *Colossians and Philemon: A Commentary on the Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* trans by William R. Poehlmann and Robert J. Karris, ed Helmut Koester (Philadelphia 1971) 68–72.

many ways, since they stand out καθ' ὑπερβολὴν [to an exceptional degree]. Other men's charity is cold if compared to Christ's more than fiery charity; other men's modesty, I could almost say, is arrogance if we consider from what state to what state he lowered himself. Finally, whatever in other men tends to reduce the praise of benefactors, such as necessity, chance, service rendered, hope of favour in return – all this was very far removed from Christ: innocent, willing, prescient. He either suffered or provided everything without recompense. An unequal example is the kind that Isaiah adduces: 'An ox knows its owner and an ass the manger of its master; but Israel does not know me, my people have not understood.'[1253] First, there is no small difference between an ox or an ass and people. There is an underlying emphasis also in the name of Israel,[1254] who were the chosen people and trained by the divine law. Next, there is a considerable difference between man and God; a man feeds his animal with hay for base work, God created man specifically to recognize his creator and to achieve eternal life. The Lord uses a terribly unequal example to refute the superstitious words of the leader of the synagogue: 'Hypocrites, does not each and every one of you untie his ox or ass from the manger on the sabbath and lead him to water? But this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound, lo, for eighteen years, should she not have been untied from that bond on the day of the sabbath?'[1255] First, there is the huge distinction between ass and man, but the Lord even exaggerates this inequality when he calls her a daughter of Abraham, quite an honorific praise among the Jews, more honorific in God's eyes because she did believe in accordance with Abraham's example. We do not read that she said anything, but Jesus had seen the silent prayer of her heart. In addition, there is a certain intensification in 'each and every one': you criticize in me what any ordinary person permits himself with your approval. There is also the inequality from the manner of the bond: man bound the ox with a rope of hemp, Satan bound her with a wretched and agonizing disease. Finally, from the span of time: you do not allow an ox or an ass to be bound for a single day, and you do not allow this woman, who has been bound for so many years, to be untied. The story about the ox and the ass fallen into a well is similar.[1256] Here the likeness is that each

* * * * *

1253 Isa 1:3

1254 For Erasmus' comments and references on the name of Israel, see *Annotationes in epistolam ad Romanos* 9:6 CWE 56 253–4; see also Jerome *Hebraicae quaestiones in libro Geneseos* (33:28–9) CCSL 72 40:18–41:23.

1255 Luke 13:15–16

1256 Luke 14:2–5

is in danger from the water, the ox that fell into the well and the man with dropsy, and respect for the sabbath did not keep them from dragging the brute animal out on the spot; here they blamed the sabbath for it not being right to rescue a man long in danger of death. Dragging out an ox or ass is a far more servile work than healing a man with a simple word, and they thought that it was not a violation of the sabbath if an ass was rescued; here they thought it was if a man was saved. The example of Matthew 12 is also unequal.[1257] The Ninevites, a barbaric people alien to God's religion, were turned to penitence in accordance with the threats of Jonah, an unknown prophet; the Jews, trained in the Law, instructed by the predictions of the prophets, not only scorned but even killed the Lord of prophets born among them, famous for so many miracles, who challenged them to penitence with such effective teaching. Likewise, the queen of Sheba – a woman, and a barbarian woman – after only hearing of Solomon's fame, set out for Jerusalem from the most distant lands of the South to hear Solomon's wisdom in person, and when she heard him, she honoured him with immense gifts;[1258] the Jews, when so admirable a teacher of heavenly wisdom[1259] came to them of his own accord, received him with insults and every kind of abuse.

'Serving the world' and 'serving Christ,' two things that some try to combine, are contradictories or contraries that do not allow a middle term.[1260] There is no compact between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial;[1261] thus love of pleasures and love of chastity clash. There are certain things that the terms themselves show clash openly, such as 'guilty' 'guiltless,' 'please' 'displease,' some less overtly, such as 'works' and 'grace,' 'Law' and 'gospel.' Paul says, 'If from works, now there is no grace; if from grace, now not from works.'[1262] 'Free' and 'obligatory' or 'due' and 'not due' clash openly. The Law threatens a penalty, the gospel promises a remission; the clash between 'punishment' and 'free forgiveness' is open, that between 'flesh' and 'spirit,' 'world' and 'God,' 'faith' and 'work,' from which St Paul often draws his arguments, is concealed.

* * * * *

1257 Matt 12:38–45

1258 Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; cf 1 Kings 10:1–10.

1259 'Teacher of heavenly wisdom' (*coelestis sapientiae doctor*): Christ's soteriological activity is teaching, and the preacher imitates Christ as teacher of this heavenly wisdom.

1260 For Erasmus' discussion of contraries, see above 669–70.

1261 2 Cor 6:14–15. See also St Jerome Ep 22.29.6 ACW 33 165.

1262 Rom 11:6. See *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 63; *Annotationes in epistulam ad Romanos* CWE 56 294–6.

They say that there is no return from privation to possession.[1263] This is perhaps true for the natural scientists, false for Christians, for Christ recalled some dead persons to life and rose again himself and made for us a sure hope of living again. Moreover, someone who lacks the light of faith suffers a more unfortunate kind of blindness than those whose physical eyes are affected, and those who lack the grace of God are more wretchedly dead than those who are lifeless in the body; and yet someone who has lost his faith is called back to faith, and someone who has been deprived of grace recovers grace, but neither without a miracle if we understand a miracle as the special working of the divine. It is indeed a less obvious but far greater miracle to recall to sanity a sinner long practised in vice than to rouse to life a corpse four days dead.[1264]

The consideration of relatives is a larger field,[1265] for relation runs through all the loci, such as between definition and defined, between genus and species, between whole and parts, between a likeness and that from which the similitude is drawn, between any opposites, between consequents; even that which something accompanies is a relation. Likewise, nothing is incompatible that is not incompatible with something. Thus outcomes look back to their origins; similarly, there is a reciprocity between efficients and effects, between matter and form and that of which it is the matter and form, between an end and that of which it is the end. Moreover, no one fails to see that there is a relation between equals, greaters, and lessers, but the presence of a relation does not automatically mean that there is also an argument from relatives; for example, when we say, 'If he is your lord, you owe him fear, if your father, honour,' there is no argument properly speaking from relatives but from consequences. Now, many things are less openly relative, for instance, in the remark of a certain Spartan king; when he refused what he had promised, and his creditor said, 'You promised, king,' he replied saying, 'If it is just, I promised it; if it is unjust, I said it.' When the creditor pressed him, saying, 'But it is fitting that a king's simple promise

* * * * *

1263 In Aristotle's philosophy privation (στέρησις) is the absence of a good that should naturally be present. See eg *Categories* 10 (13a): 'With privation and possession . . . it is impossible for change into one another to occur. For change occurs from possession to privation but from privation to possession it is impossible; one who has gone blind does not recover sight nor does a bald man regain his hair nor does a toothless man grow teeth'; see also *Topics* 6 (147b–148a). Erasmus is correct in his position because in Christ the repossession of spiritual life occurs (miraculously) in the order *super naturam*.

1264 Cf John 11:39.

1265 For 'relatives' or 'relation,' see 591 n632, 670, 675–6, 680, 684 above.

should be as firm as other men's oaths,' he replied, 'No more fitting, by Hercules, than for you to pay out what you demand from kings.'[1266] There is a reciprocal regard between asking and promising, and a man who asks rashly is no less in error than one who promises rashly. Thus there is a hidden conflict between 'son' and 'Lord,' since it is not established how someone is the lord of him whose son he is. The Lord deduces as follows: 'If Christ is the son of David, how does David, saying in the spirit, "The Lord has said to my lord," call him Lord?'[1267] In a comparable fashion Socrates refutes the charge that he denied the gods because he was said to have a familiar demon.[1268] In the opinion of those people, demons were the offspring of the gods; it is not clear, then, how someone who denies the gods admits that he has a demon. An unspoken relation is also seen in the Lord's argument: 'If you believed Moses, you would surely believe me as well; for he wrote about me.'[1269] There is a relation between predicter and predicted. Likewise, there is a relation between speech and mental thought, for speech is the revealer of the mind; hence those who speak insincerely do not produce speech but only words. Thus there is a relation between the terms for things and the things themselves; the mass of men behave absurdly in this respect by shunning the terms but not shunning the things themselves. Who would not flare up at a charge of theft? But how few would not increase their own wealth by theft. It would seem a hideous charge if someone should be called a slanderer or a backbiter; but how many there are who traduce their neighbour with slanders. On the other hand, everyone seeks the title of prince or bishop while boldly scorning the substance of the title; thus sacred garb is a sign of a purer life,[1270] as also is the shorn pate, but it is ridiculous to glory in the sign while neglecting the substance of the sign. The consequents are what the Lord mentioned: 'These signs will follow those who have believed, they will speak in new tongues, they will lift serpents,' etc,[1271] in which one gathers that if these things are not present allegorically, they do not believe. The Lord argues from consequents: 'If you were children of Abraham, you would do the works of your father,'[1272] and

* * * * *

1266 This saying of Agesilaus is from Plutarch *Moralia* (*Apophthegmata Laconica*) 208.4; see Erasmus *Apophthegmata* CWE 37 23.
1267 Matt 22:41–6; cf Ps 110:1 (Vulg 109:1).
1268 Plato *Apology* 26B–27E
1269 John 5:46
1270 For these types of criticisms, see *Moria* CWE 27 137–8.
1271 Mark 16:17–18
1272 John 8:39

likewise, 'If you were of the world, the world would love what was its own; as it is, the world hates you.'[1273]

It will be the locus from incompatibles if we should say that those people are not true believers who still speak the ambition, avarice, vengefulness, and lust of which they smack, who are so far from remedying the character of others that they infect them themselves, and who are far from not being corrupted by conversation with the wicked, give others to drink of their own poison, and even seize an opportunity for malice from kindly words.[1274] Paul reasons from incompatibles: 'If I still pleased men, I would not be a servant of Christ';[1275] 'servant' and 'free' are contraries. The giving of testimony is a consequent for a free man, an incompatible for a servant, and whatever else is consequent upon free status but conflicts with servitude.

From efficient cause or generation he will reason, 'Sin begets eternal death; hence whoever is horrified at death ought first to be horrified at sin'; 'Drunkenness begets physical ailments; if we abhor ailments, why do we willingly pursue the things that produce them?'; 'Many despise disgrace, but do not despise the evil life that begets disgrace.' Now, God is the efficient, universal cause of everything (whether there are any secondary ones is irrelevant here); but where there is an all-powerful cause, there one should not dispute about effect, and where there is a supremely good cause, it is to be gathered that there is no evil in creation.

Everything has the same universal end, so that nothing can be considered good that is directed elsewhere than towards that end. But very often the business is handled ridiculously by inverting the end; for instance, some people live to eat and drink, when we should eat and drink in order to live.[1276] Likewise, it is ridiculous when the mind serves the body, when the body was given for the purpose of serving the mind. As it is, some wield power as though the state were instituted for the sake of the prince, when conversely the prince has been instituted for the sake of the state. It was on this account that Christ rebuked the Pharisees because they allowed a man to die out of their respect for the sabbath, although the sabbath was instituted for the sake of man, not the other way

* * * * *

1273 John 15:19

1274 Cf 1 Cor 15:33; *Adagia* I x 74 *Corrumpunt mores bonos colloquia prava* 'Evil communications corrupt good manners.'

1275 Gal 1:10

1276 Cf *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.28.39. The author calls this device 'reciprocal change' (*commutatio*).

round.[1277] The same opinion should be held regarding other enactments, at least secular ones. The church has prescribed fasting on certain days so that the mind may be prepared for God's business through a reducing of the body; but if fasting weakens the body and also renders the mind less suitable for God's business, more quick to quarrels, anger, and vengefulness, one must put forward Christ's words, 'Fasting was instituted for man, not man for fasting.'[1278]

Paul reasons from effects that there is no justification from the Law but from faith, since 'The Law works anger,'[1279] while justification is the peace with God that we achieve through faith; likewise to the Galatians, 'This alone I want to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit from the works of the Law or from the hearing of faith?'[1280]

Concerning form I shall say only that God contains exemplars of everything.[1281] In the spiritual sense man is nothing to God but formless matter or clay in a potter's hand;[1282] he effects in us whatever good there is, while we through faith and obedience only provide the tractable material, so that there is no praise that we can properly claim for ourselves.

Now, if human affairs are compared with human, you will find things equal and greater and lesser in certain degrees, for example if you should match purple to purple. But if you should compare the business of the mind with the business of the body, there is scarcely any comparison on account of the immense gulf between, so that what seemed of itself something great loses its title in the comparison, if, for example, the death or life of the soul were to be compared with the death or life of the body, or if the length of our present life were compared to eternity, for then what seemed long can scarcely be called a moment. That happens to an even greater degree if our affairs are compared to divine. Thus human justice, when compared to divine justice, becomes injustice, or human wisdom,

* * * * *

1277 Mark 2:27

1278 Mark 2:27. See *Colloquia* (*A Fish Diet* / Ἰχθυοφαγία) CWE 40 675–762; and *De esu carnium* ASD IX-1 19–50.

1279 Rom 4:15

1280 Gal 3:2

1281 See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia q 44 a 3: 'Whether the Exemplary Cause Is Anything besides God?: And therefore we must say that in the divine wisdom are the types of all things, which types we have called ideas – ie exemplary forms existing in the divine mind.' For exemplars, see 697.

1282 The metaphor of the clay and potter to express God's relationship with Israel is common in both Old and New Testaments; cf Rom 9:21; Rev 2:27; Ps 2:9; Isa 29:16, 30:14, 64:8; Jer 18:6, 19:11.

when compared with uncreated wisdom, becomes foolishness, just as a lamp is not a light in the brightness of midday. Yet even this comparison is very unbalanced; there is no proportion between the finite and the infinite, just as there is also none between creator and creature.[1283] With these methods the preacher can adapt the subtlety of dialectic to the capacity of the congregation and elevate to a loftier meaning whatever seems too humble.

In addition, there are some loci so related to each other that they seem the same, in the same way that contraries and incompatibles seem the same, such as effects, outcomes, and consequences, efficient cause and generation, efficient cause and end; for the end, because it drives a man to do something, is in a way the effecter of the activity, yet they are distinguished, though by a rather fine difference. But I shall not tarry the reader with these details, for it does not matter if you slip into a related locus so long as, when the opportunity is granted, you find what was needed.

Sometimes it happens that the same argument can be treated with different loci. For instance, 'It is inappropriate for a son not to obey his parents' is an argument from incompatibles, but the same idea will be treated from a definition, 'A son who is rebellious towards his parents is no son.' 'Whoever is a mother is glad to nourish what she has created' is an argument from consequents; it will be from a definition if you should say, 'A woman who casts away what she has borne and disdains to nourish her offspring is no mother' or 'is unworthy of the name mother.'

It would not be inappropriate to this enterprise to indicate examples of loci in Divine Scripture, but on account of the subtlety of the subject this would require an effort that is endless and perhaps not even very agreeable or particularly necessary, since a reader who is not a dolt will easily apprehend them from what I have presented.

It would be no great trouble to reduce to the forms that Aristotle relates in his *Prior Analytics* the many arguments that are derived from loci, but it is neither necessary nor sufficiently appropriate when addressing a mixed crowd; it is more appropriate to do this in scholastic diatribes[1284] if

* * * * *

1283 For 'no proportion between the finite and the infinite . . .' see Aristotle *De caelo*, where he applies this principle to the question of the weight of bodies. But the principle has a wider application in theology and is used often; see eg Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 2 a 2, I q 45 a 5 ad 3; *Quaestiones disputatae* q 2 a 3 a 4; Johannes Duns Scotus *Quodlibeta* 5.9; Nicholas of Cusa *De docta ignorantia* I 3 (9), II 2 (102).

1284 Regarding 'diatribes,' Chomarat states that Erasmus had in mind scholastic

the subject should demand it, yet it is childish not to understand the force of an argument unless it is reduced to an analytic form. Granted that this kind of exercise is suitable for children, let others judge whether it is seemly for teachers or for old men.

The rhetoricians regard the shortest argument as consisting of three parts, the longest of five, the average of four.

In the longest they put the proposition, reason, proof of the reason, embellishment, and résumé.[1285] The proposition is that which is assumed for proof, the reason that which proves what has been proposed; the proof of the reason is the proof of the proof itself; the embellishment is whatever is applied to enrich the subject, the résumé whatever repeats the proposition through a brief summary of the above. For example, let the proposition be, 'The best things should be learned first';[1286] the reason, 'Because the early years are both more receptive to teaching and more likely to retain what they apprehend'; the proof of the reason, 'Because the mind is not yet taken up with secular concerns or vices'; the embellishment, 'For just as you write more comfortably whatever you like on empty tablets, and soft clay and wax more easily follows the artisan's hand, and a new pot keeps longer the aroma with which it was first imbued, even so a tender mind both acquires honourable teaching more easily and remembers better through the whole of its life what it has acquired from the time it got its very first fingernails.'[1287] Thereafter – since the same proposition can have a variety of reasons, and each one can be confirmed in a variety of ways, and embellishment brings with it the varied paraphernalia of likenesses, examples, maxims, proverbs – a wordy argument will arise, so that a résumé properly performs the function of an epilogue.

* * * * *

disputations, noting that Erasmus refers to his *De libero arbitrio* as a 'diatribe' (ASD IV-4 463 362n). The sense of the word can be taken more widely as 'serious occupation,' 'discourse,' 'short ethical treatise'; see LSJ διατριβή (1–2).

1285 See *De ratione studii* CWE 24 678–9: 'At one time the adducing of proofs should be dealt with in its five parts, at another the dilemma in two . . .' The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (2.18.28) says that 'the most complete and perfect argument . . . is that which is comprised of five parts: the Proposition (*propositio*), the Reason (*ratio*), the Proof of the Reason (*rationis confirmatio*), Embellishment (*exornatio*), and the Résumé (*conplexio*).' See also Cicero *De inventione* 1.37.67 and 1.34.57–1.41.77. The names for the five parts of an argument are translated variously in texts of Cicero and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.

1286 See *De ratione studii* CWE 24 672–5; and Quintilian 1 and 2.

1287 For 'very first fingernails' (*a teneris unguiculis*), see *Adagia* I vii 52 'Since the time their nails were soft.' See also Horace *Epistles* 1.2.69–70.

But if the embellishment should be omitted, which happens more conveniently in humbler cases, the argument will consist of four parts.[1288]

But if the proof of the reason should be omitted together with the embellishment, such as when a reason strong in itself does not require any propping up, the ratiocination will have three parts, and the embellishment will be briefer.

In a short and clear argument, however, even the embellishment can be omitted as something that everyone has ready at hand to repeat for himself. For example, 'A prince who gives impious commands is not to be obeyed'; this is the proposition. The reason, 'Because whenever the situation is such that a command either of God or of man must be ignored, it is right for divine authority to be preferred to human.' The dialecticians call this an enthymeme,[1289] which is a maxim with a reason adjoined. And it does not matter whether you put the proposition or the reason first. 'Since no one is sure whether he will be alive tomorrow, the correction of one's life should not be put off'; here the reason is put first. 'It is not safe to trust any man, since every man is a changeable animal'; here the reason follows. Sometimes the same phrase has each combined, for example, 'The wise man envies no one'; 'envying no one' is the proposition, 'wise man' has a reason included ('He does not envy because he is wise'). Likewise, 'A mother does not hate her son, a stepmother does not love her stepson.' You would be explaining it if you said, 'It is not probable that this woman hates her son, because she is a mother,' or 'It is not believable that she wishes him well, because she is his stepmother,' or 'It is not likely that this man envies anyone, because he is wise; for no one is wise except a good man, but whoever envies is bad.' Sometimes a proof of the reason is also combined, for instance, 'A wise man, because he is a good man, envies no one.' Thus the rhetoricians.

Not so the dialecticians, for whom a perfect syllogism consists of a major, a minor, and a conclusion, and the minor is not always the reason of the major; rather something is assumed that, when conceded together with the major, achieves what was to be proved. For example, 'Whoever is wise is also a good man; but a good man envies no one, therefore neither does a wise man.' Nevertheless this syllogism consists of a proposition, a reason, and a proof of the reason. The proposition is the conclusion, the reason is 'Because he is wise,' the proof of the reason is 'Whoever is

* * * * *

1288 See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 2.19.30.

1289 The enthymeme is discussed by most authors on rhetoric. Here Erasmus appears to follow Quintilian; see 5.10.1–8, 5.14.1–29. See 472 n25 above. See also Lausberg §§371, 875, 879.

wise is also a good man.' It is immediately obvious that anyone who envies is bad.

I fear that someone might feel that I have spent far too much time on these loci; hence I shall put an end to my discussion of argumentation if I first advise that sometimes an assertion[1290] combined with proofs has the weight and force of arguments because it shows the speaker's remarkable trustworthiness, so that the auditor is ashamed to dissent. For example, in confirming: 'An obvious argument is at hand.' 'I do not demand that anyone believe me unless I prove this by the clear witness of Scripture.' 'Though this is too well known to require any proof, nevertheless for the sake of those who are particularly demanding I shall not count it an imposition to confirm what I have said by providing both reasons and the clear evidence of Scripture.' 'If anyone thinks there is room for doubt here, I shall make it clearer than daylight.' 'Who is so blind as not to see this, who so shameless as to deny it?' 'Pluck up your courage, and dare to deny it.'[1291] Cyprian has an elegant example: 'Hear not what is eloquent, but what is bold. He who does not see this, sees nothing; he who dissents, has no sense.'[1292] In refutation: 'Who does not see immediately that this is too foolish to require refutation?' 'Now hear what trifling reasons heretics use to maintain their error.' 'What is more illusory than this dream?' 'Now I come not to my adversaries' reasons, but to their simple blasphemies.' 'Their arguments are too foolish to be mentioned without laughter, but also so wicked that the mind shrinks from the mention.' 'Now hear the worse than leaded daggers with which my adversaries try to slay the unconquerable truth.'[1293] 'If you

* * * * *

1290 'Assertion' (*asseveratio*) is a forceful statement of a proposition, sometimes even without adducing proof. See Quintilian 4.2.94: '... more especially certain things can only be proved by persistent assertion ...' Assertion would prove to be an especially effective and common oratorical device during the Reformation when arguments with one's opponents often proved fruitless. It was also a method recommended by ecclesiastical authorities who understood that airing subtle theological arguments before the faithful more often than not confused them and in some cases caused them to embrace heretical tenets; see McGinness *Right Thinking* 33–49.

1291 *Adagia* I viii 47 *Faciem perfricare*. *Frontis perfrictae* 'To wipe off your blushes. To put a bold front on it.'

1292 Cyprian *Ad Donatum* 2 ANF V 2 (a loose citation). Erasmus edited Cyprian's works around the time he began the *Ecclesiastes*: see *Opera divi Caecilii Cypriani episcopi Carthaginensis* ... (Basel: Froben 1520).

1293 For 'leaded daggers,' see *Adagia* II v 10 *Plumbeo jugulare gladio* 'To cut a man's throat with a leaden sword is to refute someone with worthless and trifling argument.'

should look more closely, you will find that what they are flinging against us is mere smoke.'[1294] 'I come now not to my adversaries' arguments, but to their derangements.' Countless phrases of this kind can be devised both to assist our own proof and to weaken our adversaries' objections.

With some people deprecation, beseeching, an oath, or something like these has more effect than argumentation. Examples are everywhere to hand in Paul, for instance at 1 Timothy 5, 'I bear witness before God and Christ Jesus,'[1295] etc, likewise at chapter six, 'I tell you before God, who justifies everything,'[1296] etc, and to Philemon, 'So may I enjoy you in the Lord'[1297] is beseeching. Whenever he calls God as witness or says something like 'before God,'[1298] 'the Lord knows,'[1299] and 'by your glory,'[1300] it is an oath, for example at 2 Corinthians 1: 'I invoke God as witness upon my soul.'[1301] The word 'beseech' is found throughout his writings.

But if our own proposition seems at first glance somewhat absurd or hardly plausible, while our adversaries' appears more attractively probable, it is useful to counteract this with brief preambles; for sometimes heretics produce highly probable arguments from philosophy and adduce evidence from Scripture, which at first sight seems irrefutable.[1302] We shall beg the listener, therefore, not to believe his first impression but to take a closer look, for what happens in external objects sometimes occurs in arguments: some things when seen from afar appear to be other than what they are. Sometimes what seemed from a distance to be a man is a tree when one comes closer, and a woman who seemed from a distance to be a pretty girl is an

* * * * *

1294 For 'mere smoke,' see *Adagia* I iii 41 *Fumos vendere* 'To sell smoke.'

1295 1 Tim 5:21

1296 1 Tim 6:13. Erasmus gives the passage as 'Who justifies everything' (*iustificat*); however, the word and the sense are different, both in the Greek (ζωογονοῦντος) and Latin (*vivificat*), which is best rendered as 'Who gives life to everything.' Erasmus at times recalls passages inaccurately.

1297 Philem 20

1298 Gal 1:20

1299 2 Cor 11:31

1300 1 Cor 15:31

1301 2 Cor 1:23

1302 The *Ecclesiastes* gives substantial advice to preachers whose duties include the refutation of heresy. Erasmus, however, is quick to note that not every preacher needs to or should engage in polemical discourse in the pulpit and that there are ways of handling adversaries that do not require one to delve into the theological complexities of the heretics' arguments. The advice here allows the preacher to marginalize the heretics while at the same time refrain from the subtleties of scholastic reasoning and debate.

ugly hag when one looks more closely. What heretics adduce is poison mixed into vintage wine; accordingly, let them suspend their assent for a while until the deceptive appearance is removed and the true face of the matter is revealed. As well, neither the wicked nor the Jews nor the heretics have the Scriptures; these belong to the church, whose enemy they are. Those who lack the Spirit, without which Scripture cannot be understood, have books but do not have Scriptures,[1303] just as the Jews pointlessly memorize their volumes of the Law since they do not have the true sense of the Law. Both Celsus and Porphyry make us laugh whenever they adduce Scripture;[1304] similarly, heretics fight without understanding Scripture. The hearer will have to be fortified in advance with little exordia of this sort appropriately designed to fit the nature of the case.

But to keep the argument from being dull or soporific, the audience will have to be roused with appropriate little interruptions. Augustine does this very frequently, Chrysostom not infrequently. Moreover, this is accomplished in a variety of ways: by a figure of speech, such as when something that could be said simply is expressed through a question, for example, 'With what propriety does a man who has exclusive regard for his own private interest claim for himself the title of prince?' It would be simpler and duller to say, 'The man who governs a state with regard for his own interest is not a prince.' Likewise, 'Shall we call the man who skins his own flock and takes no care of it a shepherd or a brigand?'[1305] Sometimes through an apostrophe,[1306] such as, 'What are you saying, shameless mouth?' Thus Chrysostom against Libanius, τί φῇς, ὦ παμμιαρέ; [What do you say, o thoroughly accursed one?],[1307] and Paul, 'Oh man, who are you

* * * * *

1303 Cf 2 Cor 3:6.

1304 See Origen *Contra Celsum*. Porphyry (232/3–305), editor, scholar and Plotinian philosopher, wrote and compiled numerous works, among which were his fifteen books *Contra christianos*, which were addressed often by many Fathers of the church; in 448 it was burned by order of Theodosius II, though many important fragments survive. See Adolf von Harnack *Porphyrius, 'Gegen die Christen,' 15 Bücher. Zeugnisse, Fragmente und Referate* (Berlin 1916).

1305 See *Apophthegmata* CWE 38 600, and Suetonius *Tiberius* 32.2: 'It was the part of a good shepherd to shear his flock, not skin it.'

1306 On 'apostrophe,' see Quintilian 9.2.38.

1307 There is no such reference to Libanius, and Erasmus is not quoting Chrysostom correctly. It is likely he is recalling a favourite phrase of Chrysostom: 'What do you say, unholy man, yes, most unholy man?' (Τί λέγεις, ὦ μιαρὲ καὶ παμμίαρε;). See eg John Chrysostom *In Matthaeum homiliae* (*Homily 31 on Matthew* 9:18) PG 57 371 / NPNF 1st series 10 205–10.

who reply to God?'[1308] Sometimes by an exclamation:[1309] 'Oh stupid word, oh tongue that deserves being cut out with the sword, oh the words of a sheep, not of a man.' Finally, with those little rhetorical questions by which the hearer is from time to time roused: 'Who said this? Not man, but God through a prophet,' 'How will this knot be untied?' 'Are these sufficient, or do you require firmer arguments?' And others of this sort, which the subject itself will better supply to the speaker.

It will be possible to add a sprinkling of both emotions and jests to enliven the tedium of the discussion. Frequent little transitions will be useful for the same purpose: 'You have heard the heretics' poisons: now learn the antidotes,' 'You have heard what Satan promises his followers: now learn how much better is what Christ our king promises.' But there will be an opportunity for saying more about this when we deal with the figures of speech.[1310]

That leaves the epilogue, which briefly recapitulates for the hearer what has been said in a fuller form. Certain Romans call it enumeration, the Greeks ἀνακεφαλαίωσις [summary].[1311] This device is effective in three ways. The first is that it refreshes the hearer's memory; the second is that it puts the whole case into view at one time; the third that some arguments seem rather weak when treated on their own but are nevertheless effective in a pack when combined with firmer ones. It should be observed here that an epilogue should be stated in as few words as possible in order to keep it from seeming not so much an epilogue as a new oration. And it is called ἀνακεφαλαίωσις in Greek because only the main points of the matters are repeated.[1312] Frequently this part is even necessary, namely whenever the argument consists of several parts or contains a certain degree of obscurity because of the subtlety of the subject matter, especially if the address is being given before an untrained crowd, which is both rather slow to understand and rather quick to forget because it does not have its senses trained. Here, then, it is useful to repeat summarily what has been said and to ask them to implant the words deep in their minds so that they can both share with others what they have learned and be readier to be taught the

* * * * *

1308 Rom 9:20

1309 On 'exclamation,' see Quintilian 9.2.26–7, and *Ecclesiastes* book 3 745–7, 817, 846, 867 n835.

1310 Book 3 858.

1311 See Quintilian 6.1.1–2; Cicero *De inventione* 1.52.98–56.109.

1312 The connection here is that ἀνακεφαλαίωσις contains the root κεφαλή 'head,' and *caput*, the word translated as 'main points,' also means 'head.' (Translator's note)

rest of what will be imparted; thus it will happen that the preacher himself is also rendered more eager for teaching if he sees that the effort of his sowing has not been pointless but that spiritual fruits are growing from it. And there is not much danger here that repeating what has been said correctly will engender weariness, since it is not a case of a worried advocate pleading before a cruel judge but a respected teacher before a sympathetic crowd; in a court the authority is with the one who is listening, here with the one who is speaking. Nevertheless, it is appropriate in an epilogue to retain clarity together with brevity and for one's words to be livelier and brisker as though, with the victory already won, the same things were being said but not with the same appearance. There is no need for instructions about clear brevity. Practice and the speaker's common sense will provide this. The speech will be livelier if it is uttered with assertion[1313] and if the words have emphasis, not without the figures of speech that make for liveliness. Figures of speech will provide variety, for example, if what has been said in simple words is repeated through an apostrophe or a prosopopoeia or a rhetorical question, as was said before.

There is another more prolix kind of peroration, which is called by the general term conclusion.[1314] This is comprised especially of emotions,[1315] which are more easily roused when the hearer has already been convinced and is inclined on his own either towards pity or towards indignation[1316] or towards penitence or towards any other emotional state. Furthermore, the doctrine of the Stoics, who approved of no emotions,[1317] has been rejected

* * * * *

1313 For 'assertion' (*asseveratio*), see 610 n730, 717–18 above.

1314 See Quintilian 6.1.1: 'The next subject that I was going to discuss was the peroration which some call the completion and others the conclusion. There are two kinds of peroration [*eius*], for it may deal either with facts or with the emotional aspect of the case.' Quintilian does not make the distinction between 'completion' and 'conclusion.' Chomarat (ASD V-4 469 514n) suggests that Erasmus slightly distorts Quintilian's Latin by taking the referent *eius* 'its' (ie 'of peroration') to refer to 'conclusion.'

1315 See Quintilian 6.1.9–51.

1316 See Quintilian 6.1.9 and Aristotle *Rhetoric* 2.9.1: 'Now what is called indignation is the antithesis to pity' (2.9.1).

1317 For the Stoics' view of the emotions (πάθη) as 'diseases' and for the Peripatetics' and the Academy's view of the emotions, see Cicero's extensive discussion of this in *Tusculan Disputations* 4.4.7–4.38.84. Cicero notes that the Latins use the word 'disorders' (*perturbationes*) rather than 'diseases' (*morbi*) for the Greek word πάθη, and he employs the Stoics' 'definitions and subdivisions' as they seem 'to show remarkable penetration in dealing with this problem' (4.5.10–11). Cicero adopts Zeno's definition of disorder (πάθος) as 'an agitation

and dismissed not only by Christians but also by some more reasonable Stoics themselves; for an argument can be used to defend the fact that the Athenians excluded the emotions from the pleading of cases. In those days their speeches were timed by water clocks:[1318] they were unwilling for water to be used up on irrelevant matters and for the judge to be detained excessively long with hearing the case; in addition, since an honest sentence was required of a judge bound by religious sentiment, they preferred to abstain from rousing the emotions, since these often cloud the judgment and sometimes carry an arbiter away, so that he pronounces sentence not in accordance with the law but in accordance with his mental excitement. But the man who speaks before a Christian congregation has a far different purpose, since his only reason for stirring the emotions is to make his hearers grow warm towards all that belongs to piety, such as when they are inspired

* * * * *

of the soul alien from right reason and contrary to nature' (4.5.11, 4.21.47), or '"disorder is a longing of undue violence," unduly violent however being understood to mean a longing which is far removed from the equability of nature' (4.21.47). Although Erasmus states that the Stoics 'approved of no emotions' (see eg *Moria* CWE 27 104), he, like Cicero, goes on to note (and adopt) the more moderate view of some Stoics that it was only the 'excessive and irrational impulses' that needed to be rooted out. As John Rist presents the Stoics' view of the wise man, 'so far from being emotionless' he was 'possessed of the three basic and stable emotional – and at the same time rational – dispositions of joy, wishfulness and a sense of precaution (χάρα, βούλησις, εὐλάβεια)' (25), which is similar to Erasmus' ideal of the Christian who possesses that 'mental peace' (*mentis tranquillitas*) that endures throughout adversity and prosperity. Within Cicero's discussion of the Stoic, Peripatetic, and Academic views of the positive emotions, Erasmus affirms their importance and stresses their crucial function in the work of the preacher in moving them to foster piety and the reformation of life. See John M. Rist *The Stoics* (Cambridge 1969) especially 22–36; Tad Brennan 'Stoic Moral Psychology' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* ed Brad Inwood (Cambridge 2003) 257–94; and Brad Inwood *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism* (Oxford 1985). See also Cicero *De finibus* 3.10.35, where he speaks of those emotions (*perturbationes*) that '(. . . the very sound of which seems to denote something vicious [*vitiosa*], and these emotions are not excited by any natural influence. The list of the emotions is divided into four classes, with numerous subdivisions, namely sorrow, fear, lust, and that mental emotion which the Stoics call by a name that also denotes a bodily feeling, *hedone* [ἡδονή] "pleasure," but which I prefer to style "delight," meaning the sensuous elation of the mind when in a state of exultation), these emotions, I say, are not excited by any influence of nature; they are all of them mere fancies and frivolous opinions. Therefore the Wise Man will always be free of them.' See also book 3 passim.

1318 For 'water clocks' (*clepsydrae*), see Cicero *De oratore* 3.34.138; and OLD *clepsydra*.

through the praise of harmony towards love of concord[1319] and hatred of schism, when by praise of alms they are inflamed towards generosity to the needy and scorn for greed, and by praise of innocence they are kindled towards a zeal for piety and the love of a more reformed life. Finally, what Augustine said in imitation of Plato is true, that nothing is loved except in so far as it is known and that nothing is known unless it is in some degree loved.[1320] Thus the instructor's love makes the pupil open to teaching, and our admiration for a discipline makes us learn it more willingly and more quickly.[1321] Someone will be more ready to learn theology if he is convinced that the Holy Spirit is the author of the divine books and if he is convinced that theology alone renders a man truly learned, wise, and even blessed. Cicero in the *Hortensius* fires his readers towards love of philosophy by praising it before he teaches it,[1322] and those who teach a discipline first inflame the audience, showing through amplification the greatness of its worth – what men have cultivated it, what greatness it promises, what usefulness it brings.[1323] The man who is convinced of these things is not entirely ignorant of that discipline, and yet he is capable of being taught, though not yet

* * * * *

1319 For an example of such a sermon, see the conclusion of book 4.

1320 *Confessions* 10.23–6: 'Where did they learn the meaning of happiness unless it was where they learned the meaning of truth? For they love the truth, since they do not like to be deceived, and when they love happiness – which is the same as to rejoice in truth – they must love truth also. But they could not love it [the truth] unless they had some knowledge of it in their memory' 10.23.34:15–19; (Ubi ergo noverunt hanc vitam beatam, nisi ubi noverunt etiam veritatem? Amant enim et ipsam, quia falli nolunt, et cum amant beatam vitam, quod non est aliud quam de veritate gaudium, utique amant etiam veritatem nec amarent, nisi esset aliqua notitia eius in memoria eorum); trans R.S. Pine-Coffin (Harmondsworth 1961) 229. See also *De Trinitate* 10.1: *quid igitur amat? certe enim amari aliquid nisi notum non potest*; and *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus* 35.2 WSA I-12.

1321 See *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 315.

1322 Cicero's *Hortensius* is not extant, but Erasmus would know of its power to inspire from Augustine's comments in *Confessions* 3.4: '. . . this book quite altered my affection, turned my prayers to thyself, O Lord, and made me have clean other purposes and desires . . . How did I burn then, my God, how did I burn to fly from earthly delights towards thee . . .' Cf Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 3.3.6.

1323 For this reason, at the beginning of the academic year in European universities at this time panegyrics of various disciplines, especially the *studia humanitatis*, were given by members of the faculty to inflame students to embrace with zeal and affection the studies upon which they were about to embark. See Grendler (2) 143; and McGinness *Right Thinking* 9–28.

learned. This then would be the place for explaining the differences of the emotions and how they are stirred in the minds of the audience. But I think it more suitable first to complete this round that I have begun, with the intention of approaching this subject more seasonably when I have to speak about amplifications and the pleasantness and power of oratory.

THE EVANGELICAL PREACHER
BOOK THREE

Of the orator's five tasks we have completed one – invention – tracing it through all the parts of a work with absolute thoroughness; now we shall review them, in order to add anything that seems to have been omitted.[1] Next to invention is expression,[2] of which I think I have said enough for the preacher. Third is arrangement or order, which (as I began to say when dealing with division) is understood as fourfold.

For it is a suitable arrangement of words that contributes not only to the clarity and musicality[3] of language but also to its vigour:[4] an unsuitable and jumbled order of words clouds the meaning, sometimes wrapping it in hyperbata[5] and making it tiresome with its ἀναπαπόδοτα [hypothetical

* * * * *

1 The traditional five parts of oratory (*rhetorices partes*) are invention (*inventio*), arrangement (*dispositio* or *ordo*), expression (*elocutio*), memory (*memoria*), and delivery or action (*pronuntiatio* or *actio*); see Quintilian 3.3.1–15; and Cicero *De oratore* 1.31.142: 'I learned that he must first hit upon what to say; then manage and marshall his discoveries, not merely in orderly fashion, but with a discriminating eye for the exact weight as it were of each argument; next go on to array them in the adornments of style; after that keep them guarded in his memory; and in the end deliver them with effect and charm.' The five parts of oratory are different from the parts of a speech (exordium, narration, division, confirmation or confutation, and conclusion); see book 2 passim. Erasmus begins book 3 by considering arrangement (*dispositio* or *ordo*) as the second of the five parts of oratory. The third book of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* begins in the same way and is quite similar to Erasmus' transition here from book 2 to book 3 of *Ecclesiastes*.

2 'Expression' (*elocutio*)

3 For 'musicality' (*modulatio*), see Quintilian 9.4.139–44.

4 For 'vigour' (*acrimonia*), 'force,' or 'animation,' see eg *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.15.26, 4.13.19, 4.19.26, 4.37.49; Cicero *De inventione* 2.48.143. The term is not used by Quintilian.

5 LSJ hyperbaton (ὑπερβατόν), 'a transposition of words' or 'clauses.' See Quintilian 8.6.62: '*hyperbaton*, that is, the transposition of a word, is often demanded by the structure of the sentence and the claims of elegance, and is consequently

propositions wanting the consequent clause].[6] Moreover, *compositio*[7] (about which Cicero wrote very painstakingly,[8] and Quintilian after him[9]) is what makes language suitably musical, but this part is too complex to be appropriate to a preacher,[10] though St Augustine was so far from shunning phrases made up of equal numbers of syllables, words with similar endings, words ending with similar sounds, homonyms, and other similar figures of speech that he frankly admits his fondness for them;[11] and he wrote not only his *Psalm against the Donatists*[12] but a substantial book that is abloom

* * * * *

counted among the ornaments of style. For our language would often be harsh, rough, limp or disjointed, if the words were always arranged in their natural order and attached each to each just as they occur, despite the fact that there is no real bond of union. Consequently some words require to be postponed, others to be anticipated, each being set in its appropriate place ...'

6 ἀναναπόδοτα is a very rare word, used more for effect than elucidation.

7 See Lausberg §911: '*Compositio* (Quint. *Inst*. 9.4.1), which is also called *structura* ... is the syntactic formation of the sentence-continuum ... according to the concerns of rhetoric, so not only with the purpose of *recte dicere* ... but also of *bene dicere* ... As a doctrine *compositio* comprises 1) the theory concerning the whole of the sentence and its elements ...; 2) the theory concerning the word order in the whole of the sentence ...' See also Lausberg §§911–1054.

8 Cicero *Orator* 43.147 and passim; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.12.18: 'Artistic composition consists in an arrangement of words which gives uniform finish to the discourse in every part.'

9 For 'composition' (*compositio*; also *structura*), see eg Quintilian 8.3.57, especially 9.4 passim; Cicero *Orator* 49.164, 54.181–2, 59.201.

10 See n3 above.

11 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.20.41: '... in my own expression I do not neglect these rhythmical endings altogether in so far as they may be used moderately ...' See H.I. Marrou *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (Paris 1938 [1949]) 79–81; Jean Leclercq 'Prédication et rhétorique au temps du saint Augustin' *Revue Bénédictine* 57 (1947) 117–31; and 'Prose Rhythm' OCD 888–90. See also Aristotle *Rhetoric* 3.8 (1408b–1409a).

12 See *Psalmus contra partem Donati* CSEL 51 3–15. Chomarat concurs with Marrou that the 'substantial book' is *De civitate Dei* (ASD V-5 9 18–19n); see Henri-Iréné Marrou *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (Paris 1938) 81. Marrou, however, notes the care Augustine took, by way of exception, in the composition of this work: 'La *Cité de Dieu* fait cependant exception: on y a relevé un grand nombre de *clausules* régulières. C'est qu'il s'agit cette fois d'une oeuvre d'art, de caractère oratoire; saint Augustin cherchant à atteindre spécialement le milieu cultivé a particulièrement soigné son style, voulant que le lettré le plus délicat puisse y prendre plaisir.' Below (851) Erasmus expresses reservations about whether other writings of this sort attributed to Augustine are actually his.

with figures of this kind. This was his concession to the ears of his people, who liked hardly anything that was simple. But words that have emphasis are more correctly placed at the beginning or at the end than in the middle. For example, '*You* dare say that to *me*?'; there is emphasis in each pronoun. 'A *pig*? Teaching *Minerva*?'[13] is more forceful than if you were to say, 'A pig, and it's Minerva you're teaching?' Thus Paul, 'O man, who are you to answer God?';[14] this is more powerful than if you were to say, 'Who are you, man, who are giving to God an answer?'

Another function of order is to effect a suitable arrangement of the principal arguments of a speech. This takes place in the division, of which we have spoken.[15] In these, as I pointed out before, the order most deserving of approval is when the preceding argument provides a step to the following one, such as, for example, 'First I shall say how great is the dignity and how great the happiness of virgins, then the great dangers to which this treasure is exposed'; the step from something meritorious to protecting it is appropriate, but inappropriate if you reverse the order. Likewise, 'First I shall state the virtues by which he earned the highest pontificate, then the integrity with which he carried out what he had undertaken'; it would be ridiculous if he said first how he conducted it, then how he achieved it. Sometimes a proposition softens in advance a following one that is somewhat harsh in nature; for example, the proposition that 'Even though he had attacked by ambush a citizen so deadly to the state, he would have deserved a reward, not punishment' softens in advance the other one, that 'Milo killed Clodius who was plotting treachery.'[16]

The third use of order is in individual arguments, for often the same proposition is confirmed on several arguments. One should not throw these together into a sort of heap with no discrimination but deploy them in a definite order as though for battle; but what is especially suited to

* * * * *

13 For 'A pig? Teaching Minerva?' see *Adagia* I i 40 *Sus Minervam* 'The sow (teaches) Minerva.'

14 Rom 9:20

15 See Erasmus' discussion of this in book 2 537–45.

16 Cicero *Pro Milone*; see 11.30; see Quintilian 4.3.10 and 4.5.15. Erasmus seems to be recalling this from memory. Cicero's method in this speech actually is the reverse of what Erasmus states: Cicero first makes the admission that 'he [Milo] did slay him [Clodius]'; he then suggests that even 'slaves who had defended the life of their master were in the highest degree deserving not merely of liberty but of the most generous rewards.' By inference, how much more, then, is Milo deserving of rewards because he defended the republic from one such as Clodius? See 21.57–22.58 and 29.79–30.81.

which loci[17] must be left to the judgment and strategy of the speaker. There is nothing against moving from the weaker to the strongest, but it is a good idea to put the more effective argument in the first and last places, pushing the weaker, like common soldiers, into the middle of the line of battle.[18] The only one criticized is one that passes from stronger to weaker. Thus nature has devised that we are most attentive to what is said first (if we like it, we hear the rest with favour), but what is last lingers most in the mind; what is in the middle, even if it is rather weak on its own as in single combat, nevertheless prevails by number and by accumulation.[19]

The fourth mode of order is that by which the whole speech is divided, just as the first concern that exercises the author of a book is to have the whole subject arranged in appropriate order; for example, someone who is preparing to write a history of the city of Rome adopts the following order: first he relates the city's beginnings, then Rome's prime, finally its fall.[20] The same order could be preserved if one were to describe the state of the church. We spoke before about exordium, increment, and culmination.[21] These three will be able to take their place in either direction, for example, the start from which the church began, the ways in which it grew strong and spread, then how it flourished and reached the pinnacle of piety; on the other hand, one may describe how it first began to decline, then how

* * * * *

17 For Erasmus' use of the term loci, see book 2 614–15, 633–46, 674–6, 678–80, 684, 693–717.

18 This technique is referred to as the 'Homeric disposition' (*ordo Homericus*) from Nestor's description in the *Iliad* (4.260–333) of how he arranged his men for battle; the oratorical application of this technique found its greatest expression in Demosthenes' *De corona*, where the orator's response to the most vulnerable part of his conduct, placed in the middle of the speech, is exceptionally brief and yields to the next and strongest part of his defence. See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.10.18 and Quintilian 5.12.14: 'placing the weakest in the centre of the column, so that they may derive strength from their neighbors.'

19 For 'accumulation' (Greek *συναθροισμός*), see Quintilian 8.4.27: 'This passage recalls the figure styled *συναθροισμός* by the Greeks, but in that figure it is a number of different things that are accumulated, whereas in this passage [Cicero *Pro Ligario* 3.9] all the accumulated details have but one reference.'

20 Erasmus sketches of an outline of Roman history in his Ep 586 to Dukes Frederick and George of Saxony (Antwerp, 5 June 1517), which is the preface to Suetonius. Allen notes: 'The preface to Suetonius as edited by Erasmus in the *Historiae Augustae Scriptores*' (Allen II 581). Chomarat calls this 'a brilliant synthesis of the imperial period'; see ASD V-5 11 53–4n.

21 See book 2 698.

it decayed further, finally how religion became narrowly restricted and so devoid of passion that you would hardly say it was the same church.[22]

When the preacher used to be occupied chiefly in expounding Holy Scripture, the actual sequence of Scripture supplied the order. For example, a psalm was proposed; first the heading was explained, then the Psalm.[23] If a martyr was being praised, the order was taken from the rules for the deictic type,[24] such as when Chrysostom celebrates Babylas or[25] Basil the forty martyrs.[26] St Paul generally preserves the following order: first he gives instruction and resolves some difficult questions, then gives advice, less taxing to the reader, on moral issues, and finally adds greetings, commendations, and prayers.[27] Chrysostom seems to have imitated this, since he

* * * * *

22 This comment typifies Erasmus' view of the church and of very much besides, for all creatures (human beings, institutions, nature) seem to follow a pattern of birth, growth, decline, and death (not, however, for the church as the body of Christ). This view was common among Erasmus' contemporaries. See Erasmus' preface to the Gospel of Luke (Ep 1381 to Henry VIII, Basel, 23 August 1523), which ends with the somber reflection: 'And now it may have occurred to someone to wonder how it has come about that in more recent centuries, when the world had Christian princes and bishops who were learned and rich and endowed with great authority, Christ's kingdom has contracted within such narrow limits. For if we could find the reason for this, perhaps we should more quickly find a remedy' (Ep 1381:411–16). For the church's becoming 'narrowly restricted and devoid of passion,' see book 1 CWE 67 357–8. See especially Peter G. Bietenholz *History and Biography in the Work of Erasmus of Rotterdam* (Geneva 1966).

23 For examples of Erasmus' handling of the Psalms, see his *Enarrationes sive commentarii in psalmos* CWE 63–5; some of these expositions were published while Erasmus was writing *Ecclesiastes*. See Psalm 2 (1522), Psalm 3 (1524), Psalm 4 (1525) CWE 63 65–146; Psalm 85 (1528) ASD V-3 330–427.

24 'Deictic,' 'epideictic,' or 'demonstrative' is the third *genus dicendi* and is used for encomia of saints, God, and the angels. See O'Malley *Praise and Blame* 33–76. Erasmus certainly allows for this *genus* in Christian preaching, but his focus falls significantly more on the *genus deliberativum*, because its precepts lend the most assitance to the preacher in his principal duty of teaching (*docere*).

25 Babylas was a local patron saint of Antioch, where John Chrysostom worked as a presbyter; Chrysostom's sermons in praise of St Babylas fall into the deictic *genus*; see 'On the Holy Martyr, S. Babylas' NPNF 1st series 9 141–3; *Homilia de sancto hieromartyre Babyla* PG 50 (1862) 527–34. Erasmus gives a fuller exposition of Chrysostom's eloquence below at 808–9 and passim.

26 *Homilia in quadraginta martyres* 19 PG 31 (1857) 507–26.

27 See eg Paul's Letter to the Romans, where he treats the question of justification by faith and the offer of salvation extended now to all peoples through the

runs off into some moral commonplace after the explanation of Scripture, taking his cue from what had been said.[28] The listener rests and is refreshed in these as if in some lovely garden. Jerome sometimes does the same, for example, when his discourse has sailed away from the rocks and treacherous places and comes to pleasanter ones, spreading its sails and sounding a sort of boatswain's call (this is how he talks himself).[29]

Since more modern authorities[30] have retreated from ancient precedents,[31] they have devised various forms of order on which we have already

* * * * *

preaching of the gospel (Rom 10:17) and the acceptance of this through faith in Jesus Christ.

28 For Chrysostom's reading of Paul, see Margaret M. Mitchell *The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation* (Louisville 2002).

29 For 'boatswain call' (*celeuma*), see eg St Jerome *Ad Heliodorum* 14:10 CSEL 54 59; (to Heliodorus, the Monk) ACW 33 59–69: 'At last my discourse is clear of the reefs: at last this frail bark has passed from the breakers into deep water. I may now spread my sails to the breeze; and, as I leave the rocks of controversy astern, my epilogue will be like the joyful shout of mariners. O desert, bright with the flowers of Christ! O solitude whence come the stones of which, in the Apocalypse, the city of the great king is built! (5) O wilderness, gladdened with God's especial presence!' See also Quintilian 6.1.52.

30 In this paragraph Erasmus refers to the *artes praedicandi*, the principal preaching manuals from the Middle Ages down to his own time, which gave instructions for the 'scholastic' or 'thematic' sermon, so called because the principles of organization very much resembled the scholastic method of analysing a theological question, or 'thematic,' because the sermon began with the statement of a 'theme,' often a short passage from Scripture that could be divided into two or three short phrases; these would serve as the principal division of the sermon. Added to this structure would be some of the other elements Erasmus identifies below, namely, the silent prayer, the sign of the cross, invocation of the Trinity, statement of the theme, protheme, the discourse on the divisions, closing, etc. In practice, the form could vary, as Erasmus comments at the end of this paragraph; see also book 2 511. For the medieval *artes praedicandi*, see: Marianne G. Briscoe *Artes praedicandi* (Turnhout 1992) 3–76; Th.-M. Charland *Artes praedicandi: contribution à la l'histoire de la rhétorique au moyen âge* Publications de l'Institut d'Etudes Médiévales d'Ottawa 7 (Paris 1936); Gilson, 'Michel Menot' 93–154; Murphy *Rhetoric*; and the essays in Harry Caplan *Of Eloquence: Studies in Ancient and Medieval Rhetoric* ed Anne King and Helen North (Ithaca 1970).

31 Erasmus does not condemn the *artes praedicandi* – in fact, many of his observations and instructions in books 2 and 3 follow loosely the homiletic guidelines of the *artes* – but it is obvious his preference lies with the less rigid format characteristic of the church Fathers, especially the Greeks, beginning with the homilies of Origen. Erasmus observes, too, that the practice of beginning a sermon with a theme was not at all uncommon among the Fathers of the church

touched to some extent. Some pray silently first, then stand straight and make the sign of the cross after speaking the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; then they announce what they call the 'theme,' on which they make some general prefatory remarks: this does not merit disapproval so long as what they say inspires the listener with good will[32] or attentiveness or willingness to learn. I gather that it was the custom in some places for the gospel to be read out loud after this, in the vernacular, I think; then, in order to obtain grace, the one Full of Grace was hailed;[33] after this the theme was repeated; then after announcing the headings of the argument, the sermon was delivered.

In some places local preachers[34] and those who imitate them first mention something from the gospel, then list the saints who fall either on that day or on the following ones and deal with something about their praises, then announce whatever feast days or fasts may fall in that week; finally if any admonition is required, they provide it, for example, if the poor need relief or if someone has lost something or some imminent catastrophe is threatening, they bid them to pray to God to avert it. When the address is finished, many recite some part of the Creed, together with confession and absolution.[35]

* * * * *

(see eg book 2 514): 'This method of starting from the words of Scripture is not unexampled among the ancients'). His leaning is clearly for the preaching of Origen, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, and John Chrysostom; and it is to these authors he sees good preachers returning for effective models. For continuities between Erasmus and the *artes praedicandi*, see Kilcoyne and Jennings.

32 On 'good will,' see Quintilian 4.1.5–6; Cicero *De oratore* 1.31.142: 'Before speaking on the issue, we must first secure the good will of our audience . . .'

33 'The one Full of Grace': Erasmus notes the custom of saying a Hail Mary (cf Luke 1:28) before beginning the sermon, a custom widely practised in the Middle Ages; see Jungmann I 461: 'The preacher addressed the people at the beginning and end of his sermon with the usual greeting and began his delivery. Toward the end of the Middle Ages, however, it was the practice for the preacher to begin with an *Ave Maria* while everyone knelt. . . . Alongside of the *Ave* . . . the *Veni, Sancte Spiritus* or the Lord's Prayer was also permitted.'

34 Erasmus elsewhere speaks of local preachers (*vicani*) in the smaller towns and villages of Europe; see eg book 1 CWE 67 348–9, 368, 375–6, 384.

35 'Confession and absolution' (*exomologesis et absolutio*); the reference to *exomologesis* (confession) and absolution is somewhat unusual but gives us a special look at the connection between preaching and the liturgy. Erasmus is not referring to the *Confiteor* (confession: 'I confess to Almighty God . . .'), which is recited at the foot of the altar in the beginning of the liturgy and concludes with the absolution that the priest recites with the words, 'May the

In Italy this is done after the reading of the Gospel,[36] and you may recognize in it some trace of the original custom; for in the past, after the deacon had advanced towards the congregation, greeted it, and proclaimed the Gospel at the bishop's bidding, the bishop expounded what had been read, then returned to the chancel and performed the mysteries.[37] I have seen a similar trace of antiquity in the church at Anderlecht,[38] not far from the walls of the city of Brussels: it is a college of canons, and the pastor offers mass for the people outside the chancel, arranging the timing so that the chants of the canons are finished before he reads the Gospel; then he ascends the pulpit in the same garb in which he stood at the altar and instructs the congregation; when that is finished, he returns to the altar and performs the sacrifice, and the congregation is not dismissed until then. These are remnants of the old custom. After ignorant priests took over the churches, so as not to retain any part of the ancient practice, they read the confession and absolution in place of an exposition of Scripture. This would rightly appear superfluous since confession has taken place before the beginning of the mass, which is called the introit.

Some add also a second colophon to the sermon. They read out the names of the many people who have died or are sick or in labour or in

* * * * *

almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, absolution, and remission of our sins (*Indulgentiam, absolutionem, et remissionem peccatorum nostrorum* . . .).' Josef A. Jungmann *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development* (*Missarum sollemnia*) (Westminster, Md c 1986) I 298–311 ('*Confiteor*'); 456–61 ('The Homily'); 480–90 ('The General Prayer of the Church'), and especially 490–4 ('Further Adjuncts to the Sermon') calls attention to texts identifying these additional practices that Erasmus describes, which occur after the sermon: 'The chief of these are the announcements, the formulas for popular catechesis, and the *culpa* or *Offene Schuld* ("open confession")' (490), which 'is an expanded *Confiteor* said in the vernacular' (492). He notes the persistence of this custom especially in Rhenish churches: 'It is even practiced today to some extent, but usually only at the end of the Sunday sermon preached outside Mass' (493). He notes as well that 'it was well-known even then that this type of general absolution, without a special individual confession, was not in itself enough for mortal sins; in fact this was inculcated very emphatically.'

36 For the many regional differences in the liturgy of the Roman rite in the late Middle Ages and well beyond Erasmus' time, see Jungmann passim.

37 'Performed the mysteries' refers to the Eucharistic liturgy.

38 Erasmus spent the months from May to the middle of October 1521 at the home of Pieter Wichmans in Anderlecht (in present-day Belgium). See the introduction to Erasmus' Ep 1208 to Maximiliaan van Horn, Anderlecht, 31 May 1521.

danger from some other cause and demand an Our Father and a Hail, Mary for each one they mention by name, while they themselves take an *as* or a drachma for each one.[39] Who would say that it is not an act of devotion to pray for those in distress? But why are so many names necessary? Why must prayers be divided up person by person this way? And why the necessity of stretching out the sermon with so many additions?

I have heard some who, after announcing their theme, in place of a preface[40] told stories that had nothing at all to do with their theme; when these were finished and the Virgin Mother was invoked, they repeated the theme, which was itself common, that is, equally suited to any subject; after this they expounded the Gospel of the day, but in passing, as though incidentally; then a theological question was propounded out of the blue; in last place they added narrations either of miracles or of stories, ignorant fictions on which allegories of the same sort were embellished, 'a lid worthy of the pot,'[41] as the saying goes – presumably this is their digression to refresh the by now wearied minds of their audience. This order, though it is not that of a sermon, nevertheless, in so far as it constitutes an organized whole, could be tolerated if there were nothing in it foolish or feeble and if there were some connection among theme, Gospel, question, and exhortation. The addition of a question seems to have arisen from the ostentation of the scholastics, which I think is also the origin of the fact that some first recite in Latin a summary of the subject on which they are to speak, while the crowd admires their eloquence without understanding it. They claim that this is their concession to the ears of the learned, but they are doubly in error here, in my opinion, for what need

* * * * *

39 Erasmus' choice of ancient Roman and Greek denominations is presumably meant to have a generalizing force that would be lost if a contemporary one were mentioned. (Translator's note) The *as* (or *assis*) was a small copper coin of little value in ancient Rome and was often referred to in that way; 'to care as little as a halfpenny for, regard as worthless . . .'; see OLD 196 *as*. The drachma was 'a Greek coin, of which 6,000 were equivalent to a talent' (an Athenian silver coin of considerable weight and value); see OLD 630 *drachma* and 2096 *talentum*.

40 The 'preface' is often referred to as the 'protheme,' since it led into the theme and was a brief statement of the theme itself. In this and the following paragraphs, Erasmus goes into many of the common and current abuses to which this type of preaching was subjected at the hands of incompetent clerics.

41 For 'a lid worthy of the pot,' see *Adagia* I x 72 *Dignum patella operculum* 'The cover is worthy of such a cup.' Erasmus explains the adage in light of Jerome's reference 'to a bishop who is well adapted to the dishonest behaviour of his flock.'

is there for Latin, when the scholars who are present know the vernacular as well? Besides, their prefatory remarks are often feeble, with no weight or subtlety, only to satisfy custom; there would be some value if their Latin preambles were of a sort that could hardly be expressed in the language of the people.[42]

I have heard some who seem to have imposed upon themselves a practice whose origin I do not know. They used to intersperse some phrases composed rather elaborately and in fine words and quite unlike the rest of their language, just like the choruses interspersed in Greek tragedies; hence it seems possible that this is the source that they are imitating.

Others strive to put their sermon together from different disciplines, like tiles in a mosaic, adducing a bit from ancient theology, a bit from scholastic theology, a bit from philosophy, a bit from canon law, a bit from Roman law, tossing in something from the poets; besides looking silly, this practice makes a speech disjointed, especially since the very fact that it is being done constantly proves that it is an affectation.

In Italy some partition the sermon in a different way, but no less clumsily. The first part is consigned to expounding the Gospel, the second to confuting the Jews, if they are present, the third to prophecy, a gift that many people (Girolamo Savonarola was among them)[43] claim publicly for themselves, and I myself in Rome heard someone of the highest renown at the time who with solemn affirmation openly claimed the gift of prophecy.[44] Some bit was consigned to Dante or Petrarch, whose rhythms were delivered

* * * * *

42 Erasmus' position is clear from this paragraph that preaching is to be in the vernacular and that there is little excuse for introducing Latin or other languages in sermons *ad populum*.

43 The Dominican Girolamo Savonarola (1452–98), from Ferrara, came to Florence shortly before the death of Lorenzo de' Medici. After Lorenzo's death he acquired a wide following among many Florentines who were captivated by his apocalyptic preaching. See 'Savonarola' ER V 406–10; CEBR III 199–200; Donald Weinstein *Savonarola and Florence: Prophecy and Patriotism in the Renaissance* (Princeton 1970); and Alison Brown *Medicean and Savonarolan Florence: The Interplay of Politics, Humanism, and Religion* (Turnhout 2011).

44 Erasmus was at Rome from 1508–9. Chomarat opines that he may have heard Giles of Viterbo (1469–1532), vicar general of the Augustinians and later cardinal, who was given to apocalpytic speculation and mysticism; ASD V-5 13 144n. See John W. O'Malley *Giles of Viterbo on Church and Reform: A Study in Renaissance Thought* (Leiden 1968) and 'Giles of Viterebo' ER III 55. It seems unlikely, however, that Giles of Viterbo would have made such a statement publicly. Numerous authors cover this topic extensively in *Prophetic Rome in the High Renaissance Period: Essays* ed Marjorie Reeves (Oxford 1992).

in a melodious voice and 'with full flutes,'[45] as they say, along with extraordinary physical gesturing.[46] You would have declared that something more sacred than the Gospel was being said. Those who are commended by the title of a religious order indulge in fanciful novelties of this kind more than those that they call secular because they are not monks; they are of course humouring the feelings of the mob rather than exercising judgment. Nothing is fussier than the ignorant mob; if someone should try to oblige them, the form of preaching would have to be changed continually. It is more advisable, therefore, for the preacher to follow what is best; through familiarity the congregation will come to like it too.

I have heard some who for show introduced into their sermons paradoxes that were quite ridiculous, and they advertised the sharpness of their intellect by complicating these rather than explaining them, in order to convince the businessmen whose generosity they were inviting that they had not altogether wasted their effort in the schools. The mob must indeed be humoured to some extent, but only without retreating from the soundness of the divine word; and let us always remember that there is a very great difference between a preacher of the Gospel and an advocate in the courts, who will do anything to win his case, or an actor, whose only goal is for his performance to please the theatre.

Which order is best will be clear partly from what we said above about the division of propositions, partly from what we are now adding.

Concerning memory, too, I think that I have given sufficient advice for this purpose: if someone should study carefully a system for memorization[47] and pay attention to places and images,[48] the effort, at least in my

* * * * *

45 For 'with full flutes,' cf *Adagia* I v 96 *Apertis tibiis* 'Using all holes (With all the stops out).'

46 Erasmus takes a dim view of 'extraordinary physical gesturing' (*gesticulatio*) of this sort. For their importance and appropriate use, see especially Quintilian 11.3.65–184.

47 With 'a system for memorization' (*artificium*), Erasmus refers here to the art of memory (*ars memoriae*), the numerous techniques for retaining large amounts of material for public speaking.

48 See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.16.29: 'The artificial memory includes backgrounds and images *ex locis et imaginibus*. By backgrounds I mean such scenes as are naturally or artificially set off on a small scale, complete and conspicuous, so that we can grasp and embrace them easily by the natural memory – for example, a house, an intercolumnar space, a recess, an arch, or the like. An image is, as it were, a figure, mark, or portrait of the object we wish to remember; for example, if we wish to recall a horse, a lion, or an eagle, we must place its image in a definite background.'

judgment, will prove more of a hindrance than a benefit. First the worry about applying the rules blunts creativity and chills the ardour of speech, then chills the native power of memory (which is thoroughly capable of retaining a great deal, especially if a fertile nature is supplemented by intelligence, application, exercise, and order),[49] since those who keep a careful eye on artistry sometimes experience what often happens to those who employ excessively fussy devices to accomplish something – that preparing the device requires more trouble than there would be in finishing the business in an ordinary way. Thus it would be faster to learn thoroughly what you want to remember than to sort everything into places and images, so that you now require two memories, one for the things of which you are preparing to speak and one for the places and images that you need to devise from scratch; thus no little inventive effort is added to the work of fixing them in your mind.[50] Those who have taken exceptional pleasure in this technique as young men feel these inconveniences more when they are old men.

But if it should come to pass that many names need to be recited, or a rather long passage of Scripture needs to be cited, and the memory has been weakened either by nature or by old age, it is no disgrace for the speaker to read a long list of names from a sheet of paper; and indeed a long illustrative passage of Scripture has more weight and authority if you read it from a sheet or a book rather than citing it from memory. The same goes for the witness of celebrated teachers, especially if the passage is outstanding and worthy of notice.

* * * * *

49 For memory, see eg: Quintilian 11.2.1–51; Cicero *De oratore* 2.87.356–8; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.16–23, 29–33. See especially Erasmus *De ratione studii* CWE 24 671–2.

50 Erasmus does not give excessive attention to the art of memory; see *De ratione studii* CWE 24 671–2: 'Although I do not deny that memory is aided by "places" and "images," nevertheless the best memory is based on three things above all: understanding, system, and care.' 'Places' (*loci*) and 'images' (*imagines*) refer to the memnonic techniques of mentally constructing a dwelling ('memory palace'), placing in each of its rooms an image of an idea one wished to recall; as the speaker mentally passed from room to room, he found the image with its associated idea in each locality that formed the next piece of his discourse. On the art of memory, see: Quintilian 11.2.1–51; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.16.28–24.40; Cicero *De oratore* 2.86.350–88.361. See also Frances A. Yates *The Art of Memory* (Chicago 1966); Mary Carruthers *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* 2nd ed (Cambridge 2008); *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* ed Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski (Philadelphia 2002); and Jonathan D. Spence *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* (New York 1984). See also 737 below.

And it is not always necessary to add the number of the Psalm or chapter and to indicate whether it is at the beginning or in the middle or at the end, as lawyers sometimes do to show off, adding to the heading the law and the section, sometimes the line as well.[51] And yet they have better reason to do this than a preacher; this is the practice of their profession, their audience demands it, to facilitate the comparison of passages. For the ancients it was enough to say, 'As Paul teaches, writing to the Romans' or 'Just as the Lord says in the Gospel of Matthew'; but if the thought is such that it is likely to lack credibility unless confirmed by the sure witness of Scripture, then it would be perfectly appropriate to apply that precision in the citation. Some make a twofold error in this regard by saying nothing without a scriptural witness, even if the subject is such that it requires no witness, and by invariably adding the number of the chapter. This practice not only has the appearance of ostentation but interrupts the flow of speech and sheds a kind of fog over things. The truth of this will be felt by anyone who has read Aquinas' commentaries on the Epistles of Paul, though it is not peculiar to Thomas but shared with all or certainly most of the writers of that age. Though it arose from a good source, it has become a vice through affectation; as a result, some learned men would rather write the number in the margins than add it to the text, for no other reason than that it interrupts the flow of the text and creates a certain flatness.

Both the physicians and Marsilio Ficino after them promise some assistance in strengthening the memory,[52] but what contributes most, besides the things that we have mentioned, is a life of constant sobriety, for intoxication and drunkenness both blunt the mind and altogether bury the memory. The variety of one's concerns and the multitude of one's occupations are also an impediment, as is the hurried reading of disparate works. I think that the principal reason why old age is forgetful is that that power of the mind is overwhelmed by the mass of things. Extreme bashfulness is an impediment, as are the unfamiliarity of the audience and nervousness. Bashfulness and unfamiliarity is overcome by habituation. Demosthenes had a lapse of

* * * * *

51 In brief, Erasmus advises that it is not usually necessary to give the chapter number when citing Scripture, as it detracts from the flow of the sermon, as he explains below.

52 See Marsilio Ficino *Three Books on Life* ed and trans C. Kaske and J. Clark (Binghamton, NY 1989) I 25 (on Dullness and Forgetfulness) 159–61, where he recommends medicinal remedies to scholars for assisting the memory. On Ficino, see 'Ficino, Marsilio' ER II 353–7; and CEBR II 27–30.

memory when pleading before King Philip, something that had never happened to him before the Athenians,[53] but Aeschines, an orator far inferior to Demosthenes, had no such lapse when pleading before the same king, for worried effort impedes the very thing that it most pursues.

That leaves performance or delivery,[54] namely the control of the voice, face, and entire body in a manner appropriate to the subject. Nature shapes man for these things as it does for other things also, and method completes the process, for even those who are completely uninstructed in the art have a different voice, a different face, a different comportment of the rest of their body when angry and well disposed, when threatening and flattering, when admiring and despising, when gloomy and glad – something the reader will understand in the same way about the other emotions. The best thing, then, is to follow nature here, but taking care that any flaw that it contains and anything that misguided imitation and practice has introduced should be corrected, if not in accordance with that great mirror of Demosthenes,[55] at least in accordance with the judgment of a candid friend. For things that seem (and are) extremely unbecoming to others often deceive a man, even though he is otherwise learned. Sometimes too we are self-satisfied over things that deservedly dissatisfy our audience; in the case of these a friendly adviser will perform no small service. Everyone finds himself handsome,[56] and no one can know himself adequately unless he gazes upon himself with another's eyes.

But the best thing will be to take one's example from others and to imitate whatever one sees as attractive, avoiding whatever seems unattractive,

* * * * *

53 This is Aeschines' explanation for Demosthenes' loss of memory when he appeared with the Athenian delegation at the court of Philip of Macedon; but there may have been other reasons for his silence, considering the circumstances and the contrary loyalties of Demosthenes' fellow delegates; see Aeschines *De falsa legatione* 34–5: 'So when all were thus prepared to listen, this creature mouthed forth a proem – an obscure sort of thing and as dead as fright could make it; and getting on a little way into the subject he suddenly stopped speaking and stood helpless; finally he collapsed completely.'

54 For 'performance or delivery' (*actio sive pronunciatio*), see Quintilian 11.3; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.11–15, 19–27; Cicero *De oratore* 3.56–60, 213–27; idem *Orator* 17–18.

55 See Plutarch *Demosthenes* 850; and Quintilian 11.3.68: 'Gesture and movement are also productive of grace. It was for this reason that Demosthenes used to practise his delivery in front of a large mirror, since, in spite of the fact that its reflexions are reversed, he trusted his eyes to enable him to judge accurately the effect produced.'

56 'Everyone finds himself handsome' (*Sibi quisque pulcher est*) is like the adage, 'What is one's own is beautiful' (*Suum cuique pulchrum*); see *Adagia* I ii 15.

but always taking account of the person's nature, for the same things do not suit everyone, whether because of a difference in natural ability or some quality that has been added to it. For the same things would not have suited Cato[57] and Cicero, since the former, being a Stoic, was by nature unbending and severe, the latter a crowd-pleaser who enjoyed witty jests; thus what suits an old man does not automatically suit a youth, what suits a bishop does not suit a simple priest, what suits someone who is not a monk does not suit a monk.

Some, through the weakness of their windpipe and muscles, have a naturally thin voice, some have a raspy one, others quite a weak one through the infirmity of their lungs, others a halting and broken one through the weakness of their lung or chest; physicians call these asthmatics. Some, from a weakness of their tongue and throat, which makes them stammer, stutter, misspeak, and falter, have a poorly articulated voice. Training alleviates these problems if they are minor; a sober life alleviates others, for raspiness sometimes arises from drunkenness, thinness or harshness of the voice sometimes from fasting and vigils.

Demosthenes is a shining example of how powerful training is even in the case of considerable natural defects.[58] Since his tongue was insufficiently articulate to be able to pronounce the first letter of the art that he made his business and said 'lhetolic' instead of 'rhetoric,' he remedied this fault by speaking while he rolled stones under his tongue. He corrected the halting of his breath by reciting a long string of verses continuously without a breath while climbing a mountain. Moreover, he overcame the weakness of his voice by declaiming against the sea when it was at its noisiest. He arranged his face before a large mirror, as we just mentioned. He corrected the tossing of his shoulders by speaking while standing on a narrow platform, with the point of a spear that was hanging aloft aimed at his shoulder, so that he would be reminded by the pain if in the heat of speaking he had forgotten to avoid it. Finally, he strengthened his memory with a written text. In this fashion that man turned out the greatest of orators almost against nature's will.

The skill of physicians also has some assistance to offer in this sphere. The problems that have been acquired through bad habits are corrected by

* * * * *

57 Marcus Portius Cato (95–46 BC). See 'Cato Uticensis' OCD 215–6; see also book 2 485, 518, 597–8.

58 See Plutarch *Demosthenes* 849 and 850 for Demosthenes' efforts to overcome his natural shortcomings as a speaker; see aslo Erasmus *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 404. For some methods of improving pronunciation, see Quintilian 1.1.37.

different ones. For some make their voice thin like the voice of women, eunuchs, or the infirm, a fault that is also characteristic of certain nationalities. On the other hand, some widen the throat to produce a loud but tight and deep sound characteristic of the singers who take the bass line, not unlike that of braying asses; and yet some are so fond of this loudness of sound, or rather ὀγκηθμός [braying], that they endanger their health by suffering ruptures to obtain it, and they do it especially in the transition from childhood to adolescence, when nature herself is changing the voice: at that age a lack of training is harmful, but the training should be somewhat restrained. Others completely distend their lungs and let out a sound that is monstrous rather than sonorous, like the awful sound that Demosthenes criticizes in Aeschines.[59] Some breathe out through their nostrils, others in their attempt to intensify their sound produce an unseemly cackle not unlike the crowing of roosters, others hurl their words instead of speaking them. I have seen some run one word into another, in accordance (I suspect) with the habit of their nation, and swallow a good part of their syllables within their jaws. I have observed some who hem and haw when they were about to say something; when their attention was drawn to this, they were surprised, being unaware of course that they were subject to this fault, so accustomed to it had they become. Some constantly interrupt their speech with silly or meaningless words, as though using these intervals to think of what they were going to say next. Certain men, in their pursuit of gravity, interpose a silence almost after every word; Jerome censures a certain Grunnius on this account, stating, 'You would say the man was sobbing, not speaking.'[60]

* * * * *

59 For Demosthenes' criticisms of Aeschines, see his *De falsa legatione*, especially 337–9.

60 Jerome Ep 125.18 NPNF 2nd series 6 250; CSEL 56 137. Jerome is not so much censuring Grunnius as using him (ie Rufinus of Aquileia) as an example of this type of speaking: 'When the grunter wished to speak he used to come forward at a snail's pace . . .' The character of Grunnius was fictional: 'The nickname is taken from a burlesque very popular in Jerome's day entitled "The Porker's Last Will and Testament." In this the testator's full name is set down as Marcus Grunnius Corocotta, i.e., Mark Grunter Hog. In the beginning of the twelfth book of his commentary on Isaiah Jerome mentions the "Testament" as being then a popular school book' (250 n1). See Erasmus' Ep 447 to Lambertus Grunnius, London or Rochester?, August 1516 (see especially 6–7), Ep 222:42, and Allen Ep 2440, 5 March 1531. Erasmus no doubt was inspired by St Jerome who gave the name Grunnius to his adversary Rufinus; see Jerome *Commentary on Jeremiah* trans introduction and notes by Michael Graves, ed Christopher A. Hall, Ancient Christian Texts (Downers Grove, Ill 2011) xxx, 2, 112, 135, 174, 180; *In Hieremiam prophetam* prologus 4 CCSL 74 2:15.

I have heard some who sang whenever they were quoting the words of divine Scripture, yet this seemed more tolerable than the fact that others read the same text as though the individual syllables were individual words separated by equal intervals;[61] and yet that is anything but speaking, for in singing the accents and separation of words are observed. Here, where neither the accents are observed nor the length of syllables nor the separation of words nor the intervals of phrases, there is noise rather than speech. But many are so minded that they turn up their noses at whatever is ordinary and think that whatever is unusual is also beautiful. There are countless problems of this sort that are difficult to unlearn if they have been kept to adulthood, and therefore it is better to forestall them at a fairly tender age.[62] For the ancients, training a boy's mouth to enunciate correctly was the chief concern.

The best voice is the one that transmits words, spoken softly and at a distance,[63] into the ears of the audience, the sort that they say Thracalus had,[64] who could be heard easily and even understood in three courtrooms when pleading a case. For there is a certain largeness of voice, which projects sound for a distance but does not project words (yet it is pointless for a speaker to be heard if he is not understood); on the other hand, some have a rather thin voice, but one that penetrates the audience's ears easily and allows easy understanding of the words.

Yet no one has so hapless a voice that he cannot somehow change it in accordance with the nature of what is being said, something we notice both in horses and dogs, which have one voice when angry, another when wheedling, another when happy or sad, another when they fear something. But the preacher must preserve a mean here such that, while his speaking is not dead and lifeless, neither does it ring all the changes that an actor would. In the old drama the cantor used to modify his voice to suit the character and

* * * * *

61 For defects in pronuntiation, see *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 403–27.

62 *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 409 (translated as *The Right Way of Speaking Latin and Greek: A Dialogue*)

63 Latin 'Optima vox est quae lenites ac procul articulata verba transmittit in aures auditorum . . .': Chomarat says that *procul* is 'rattaché à *transmittit*' (ASD V-5 21 288n); but it is connected by *ac* 'and' to *leniter*, and the structure of the sentence shows that both modify *articulata*; what Erasmus means is that the words can be heard clearly though spoken without force and at a distance. (Translator's note)

64 See Quintilian 12.5.5–6: 'Our own age has had orators of greater resource and power, but Trachalus appeared to stand out above all his contemporaries, when he was speaking . . .' See also 10.1.119.

the sentiment expressed, while an actor governed his gestures according to the cantor's voice. A mime took both parts, the reciter's and the actor's.[65] There is a kind of imitation that befits the preacher, a kind that does not.

Again, there is a kind of evenness that is fitting,[66] a kind that is not. Some execute their speech in a constant tone of voice as though on a single string;[67] that was the style that Pius II observed when preaching before a congregation and Guarino when lecturing, according to those who heard them.[68] I myself heard someone uncommonly commended by his learning and reputation for piety who used to recite his whole address as if from a book, with motionless eyes, a single facial expression, a single voice. He could have been taken for a statue had his voice and mouth, at any rate, not shown that he was human. But that isn't even talking, whereas a preacher ought to possess something beyond everyday speech. And no less annoying is the evenness of voice that some employ in accented and unaccented syllables; they drop it by an interval of a third until they lower the final element, so that the relation of the lowest part of the voice to the highest makes a fifth.

But an appropriate change of voice helps not only to stir the emotions but also to create credibility. 'It makes little difference,' as Davus says in the comedy, 'whether you do something from the heart or on purpose';[69]

* * * * *

65 See eg Livy's account of Livius Andronicus *Ab urbe condita* 7.2.8–10; *Greek and Roman Actors: Aspects of an Ancient Profession* ed Pat Easterling and Edith Hall (Cambridge 2002); Elaine Fantham 'Mime: The Missing Link in Roman Literary History' *Classical World* 82 (1989) 153–63; OCD 688–9 *Mimus*, and *Classical Tradition* 'Mime and Pantomime' 591–2.

66 For 'evenness' (*aequalitas*), see Quintilian 11.3.43: 'The first essential of a good delivery is evenness.'

67 See Quintilian 11.3.43: 'The second essential is variety of tone, and it is in this alone that delivery really consists.'

68 Pius II (pope, 1458–64): Enea Silvio (Aeneas Sylvius) Piccolomini (1405–64) was a student of Francesco Filelfo and a noted humanist who left extensive memoirs; see CEBR II 97–8. For the complete version of this translated work, see *The Commentaries of Pius II* trans Florence A. Gragg, ed Leona C. Gabel (Northampton, Mass [1937]–57). For Guarino of Verona (1370–1460), see 'Guarini, Guarino' ER III 97–8; CEBR II 148–9. This Guarino is to be distinguished from his son, Battista Guarino (1434–1513), another eminent humanist. See Erasmus' praise for the eloquence of Valla, Filelfo, Enea Silvio, Augustino Dati (of Siena), Guarino, Poggio, and Gasparino (Barzizza); Ep 23:76–80 (to Cornelius Gerard, Steyn, June 1489[?]).

69 Davus is the servant-slave in Terence's *Andria*; see 794–5. Erasmus is citing from memory and alluding to Terence's lines: 'Do you think it makes so little difference whether you say things honestly and naturally or after preparation?'

for since nature itself changes the voice and face in accordance with the emotions, those who enunciate very different things with the same voice and expression are not taken to be speaking sincerely. A certain Callidius was rightly criticized by Cicero for describing dreadful events in a flat manner, saying, 'Callidius, would you relate those things in the same manner if you were not feigning them? By Hercules, we could hardly keep awake there.'[70] We read about the Lord saying some things with a more distinct voice, and he probably used a harsher tone when he said, 'Woe to you hypocrites'[71] than when he spoke to Simon at the banquet about the woman who sinned[72] or when he explained a parable to the apostles,[73] again when he said indignantly, 'O perverse and unbelieving nation, how long will I be with you, how long will I endure you?'[74] and when he said, 'Come to me all you who toil and are burdened, and I will refresh you.'[75] In fact Paul wishes to change his voice among the Galatians if he could be with them, now frightening them, now beseeching, now coaxing.[76] There is then a changing of voice in accordance with nature that is not unseemly for men of authority. Indeed, it

* * * * *

(*Paullum interesse censes ex animo omnia, / ut fert natura, facias an de industria?* [794–5]).

70 *Brutus* 80.278. Again Erasmus cites from memory. The line in *Brutus* reads: 'Come now, Marcus Calidius, would you present your case in that way if it were not all a figment of your imagination? ... In fact, so far from touching my feelings, I could scarcely refrain from going to sleep then and there.' ('*Tu istuc, M. Calidi, nisi fingeres, sic ageres? Praesertim cum ista eloquentia alienorum hominum pericula defendere acerrume soleas, tuum neglegeres? Ubi dolor, ubi ardor animi, qui etiam ex infantium ingeniis elicere voces et querelas solet? Nulla perturbatio animi, nulla corporis, frons non percussa, non femur; pedis, quod minimum est, nulla supplosio. Itaque tantum afuit ut inflammares nostros animos, somnum isto loco vix tenebamus.*')

71 Matt 23:13, 23, 25, 27, 29

72 Luke 7:36–50

73 Eg Matt 13:47–52

74 Matt 17:16

75 Matt 11:28

76 Gal 4:20; see *Paraphrasis in Galatas* CWE 42 118: 'Would that I might now be among you so that what I express inadequately in a letter I might be able to communicate to you with the spoken word. My face, my tears, the ardour of my voice itself would add something. I would change myself into everything to recall you to Christ, now coaxing, now entreating, now reprimanding. [Cf 2 Tim 3:16, 4:2.] I would better accommodate my speech to the varieties of your moods and to the present matter ...' Erasmus' words capture the lesson of accommodation that is so fundamental to his homiletic instruction in *Ecclesiastes*.

is best to follow nature in this matter, so long as nature's deficiency or excess or flaw is corrected carefully. Moreover, whatever departs noticeably from nature still lacks credibility even though it gives pleasure.

On the other hand, one must avoid the sort of imitation practised by actors, whereby you imitate a woman's voice if you are quoting a woman's words, babble boyishly if using the words of a boy, act like an old man, like a drunk, like an angry man or a mourner, if you are taking these parts, and so on and so forth – a kind of imitation that is criticized even among people of the theatre. Yet in the speech of an eloquent preacher you might sense a certain clever and restrained imitation that delights and moves, but without anything theatrical or feigned. Now, many words for things have been devised deliberately to express the meaning by the sound itself, such as 'snarl,' 'jabber,' 'snort,' 'hiss,' 'lightning,' 'thunder,' 'billow,' 'whirlwind,' 'murmur,' which Plato discusses in his *Cratylus*,[77] yet it would be absurd for someone to emit a husky noise through the nose and imitate the grunting of pigs when he says 'grunt.' In other circumstances, however, a moderate heightening of voice and gesture will be appropriate.

In Italy the delivery of some preachers comes very close to that of the beggars who set up a table in the market and commend their trifles with remarkable vocal dexterity; their voice, however, is melodious, smooth and clear, audible at a distance, and more caressing than that of the beggars. I would not criticize this if it were done with moderation, for it has many advantages. First, thanks to the widening of the voice's path and of the muscles, the voice comes out larger if it is naturally small and gentler if harsh. As well, this method removes or at least lessens the problem of stuttering, to which they say Pomponius Laetus was prone in private conversation,[78] though he had an agile tongue when lecturing from his chair. Moreover, it spreads more broadly to the ears; finally, the speaker expends less effort.

In England you'll find some men, like the hawkers in Italy that I just mentioned, who burst into the banquets of the powerful or into taverns and

* * * * *

77 See *Cratylus* 425B–427; see also book 2 631 above for Erasmus' reference to this dialogue.

78 Pomponius Laetus (1428–98), humanist, founder of the Roman Academy c 1460, and professor at the *Gymnasium Romanum*, succeeding his teacher Lorenzo Valla, was the centre of a circle of humanists at Rome who consciously sought to revive ancient Rome and its language. Laetus wrote commentaries on Varro, Pliny, and Sallust and published works on Roman antiquities. Erasmus' mention of him arises from Laetus' speech defect rather than his contributions as a humanist. See *Ciceronianus* CWE 28 417. See 'Leto, Pomponeo' ER III 415–16; and CEBR III 110–11.

recite some theme that they have memorized, such as death's universal dominion or the praise of matrimony. But because that language, like German, consists largely of monosyllables, and they deliberately avoid singing, they strike us really as barking rather than singing; this problem caused me some annoyance in certain preachers there.[79] But a voice ought to be smooth rather than noticeably musical, to prevent anyone casting at the preacher what was said to someone who spoke in a sing-song: 'If you're talking, you're singing; if you're singing, you're singing badly.'

Some employ a constant vocal intensity, which the Greeks call μονοτονία [monotone].[80] Cicero confesses that he was inclined to this fault when he first began to speak,[81] and there is no lack today of people who think it fine to remind us of Homer's Stentor[82] and claim that in this way they are imitating St Dominic,[83] who, it is said, had so loud a voice that he could be heard by those who were seven miles away – something that seems simply incredible to those unaware that Spanish miles are much shorter than German.[84]

And no less mistaken are those who are always raising their voice with a sudden shout and immediately lowering it though the subject contains nothing forceful; this practice has a certain look of insanity about it.[85] We see in some men's published homilies that a place is selected where they are to shout with all their might, not because the subject demands an exclamation but because they have convinced themselves that shouting is part

* * * * *

79 See Chomarat *Grammaire* I 137–46, where he demonstrates that Erasmus 'despite his numerous sojourns in Great Britain and his affection for the land never learned its language' (144); as for German, he had but a rudimentary knowledge.

80 See Quintilian 11.3.45: 'We must ... avoid ... monotony ... the unvarying exertion both of lungs and voice.'

81 *Brutus* 91.313: 'It was my habit to speak without variety of modulation and with voice and whole body at high tension.'

82 *Iliad* 5.783: 'the noble Stentor of the brazen voice, who could raise a shout like that of fifty men together'; known for his 'stentorian' voice.

83 Dominic de Guzmán (1170–221), born in Caleruega (Burgos), Spain, founder of the mendicant Order of Preachers (Dominicans), preached in southern France at the time of the Albigensian heresy. It is unknown where this comment about his voice originated. See 'Dominic, St' ODCC 496–7.

84 Chomarat notes that a stride or step is about 1.5 metres (ASD V-5 25 368–9n); the distance of seven German miles is then a little greater than ten kilometers. What his source gives in modern (German) units Erasmus translates into Roman units.

85 See *Moria* CWE 27 134.

of a sermon,[86] and think themselves marvellously forceful when they have shouted six or eight times, as loudly as they can, 'Oh greed, detestable vice, oh source and root of all evils,[87] oh pestilent disease, oh daughter of the devil, oh mental blindness, oh subversion of religion'; and they sometimes wring tears from boys and young women with their shouts, but these dry up when the shouting does. Yet intelligent listeners, since it is obvious to them that those shouts do not proceed from the speaker's emotion, are not moved at all but rather are offended, inasmuch as the voice that produces emotion in the audience's minds is that which comes from a mind that is itself deeply moved,[88] especially when assisted by appropriate expression and gesture.

Rhetoricians have condemned too much straining of the voice because neither the speaker nor the listener can endure it for long; likewise they condemn a voice that is pitched too low because it is too faint and impinges less upon the ear.[89] The middle range best suits the preacher (though within this too there is room for variety), whether because the subject matter requires it or because nothing can be tolerated for long unless it is made attractive by some variation. Singers have not missed this: they give their instruments a sound that is sometimes bright, sometimes dark, and sometimes rather hoarse. Moreover, there are countless inflections of the voice beyond high, low, and middle pitch. Sometimes it is more excited as in phrases and clauses and individual words that have an emotional impact of their own; sometimes it is slower and more drawn out when we express admiration or criticism, softer when we make a request or beg for mercy, louder when we are angry, and so on for the rest (for you would not want me to pursue a subject that in its nature has no limits). You could detect traces of this in the chanting, very similar to reading aloud, that has survived from the past up to our own time. For example, the same voice is not

* * * * *

86 Both Quintilian and Cicero recommend the appropriate use of exclamation; see Quintilian 9.1.34 and 39, 9.2.26–7, 9.3.97; Cicero *Orator* 39.135 and *De oratore* 3.54.207.

87 See 1 Tim 6:10.

88 This is a fundamental rhetorical principle that the one who seeks to move others first be moved himself; see Quintilian 6.2.26–7: 'The prime essential for stirring the emotions of others is, in my opinion, first to feel those emotions oneself.' This principle translates itself, too, into the life of the spirit; for the preacher first must be moved by the example and teachings of Christ to move others to embrace them. See also Horace *Ars poetica* 102–3: *si vis me flere, dolendum est / primum ipsi tibi*.

89 See eg Quintilian 11.3.41–3.

used throughout in the Lord's Prayer,[90] but the variation does not exceed the interval of a fourth, except that it lowers the voice on 'lead us not,' in accordance with formal teachings that state that a lower sound is appropriate to those in fear. When the narrative of Christ's death is intoned in church,[91] the highest voice is assigned to the Jews and others, the lowest to Christ, the middle to the Evangelist who is the narrator, which is in line with Quintilian's advice that the middle sound is appropriate for narrative. Moreover, all the singing ranges within the interval of the fourth, which is the most difficult to perceive of the harmonies[92] and the least triumphant.

Here some are led astray by a perverse imitation of the art of rhetoric, which the Greeks call κακόζηλον [perverse affectation].[93] They have heard that rhetoricians teach that an exordium ought to be quite calm, neither noisy nor stirred by the more violent emotions, and so they begin in such a way that they themselves hardly catch what they are saying (as if it were important for something to be said that no one understands!). Then they utter the same words a little more clearly until they reach the proper sound.[94]

Others, because they have read that exclamation has been included among rhetorical figures of speech, start right off with a shout, in the manner of Ajax and of people who are going mad.[95] Notable for this flaw are certain sermons that some ignorant and shameless ranter has tried to foist

* * * * *

90 The 'Lord's Prayer' (*Pater noster*) is chanted at high mass by the celebrant at the end of the canon of the mass, but the congregation responds with the final words, *Sed libera nos a malo* 'But deliver us from evil,' which as Erasmus notes is sung lower, suggesting the emotion of fear.

91 Erasmus is referring to the lengthy account of the passion of Christ from John's Gospel (18:1–19:42), which is chanted at the liturgy of Good Friday.

92 Cf Boethius *De musica* 1.10: *diatessaron quae est minima consonantia*.

93 For κακόζηλον, see Quintilian 8.3.56: 'Perverse affectation is a fault in every kind of style'; LSJ 'Using a bad, affected style.' See Lausberg §1073.

94 See *Moria* CWE 27 134.

95 The Greek hero Ajax had been driven raving mad after being dishonoured by the chieftains who awarded Achilles' armour to Odysseus rather than him. See Sophocles *Ajax* 348–53: 'Hail, dear sailors, the only ones among my friends who still abide by the rule of loyalty, see what kind of a wave, sent up by a deadly surge, circles rapidly about me!' Erasmus follows a number of ancient authors who parody this kind of inappropriate shouting of speakers, particularly at the beginning of their speech. See Ovid *Metamorphoses* 13.382–90; Horace *Satires* 2.3.193–202; Seneca *Epistulae morales* 15.7; Petronius *Satyricon* 59.

upon us under Augustine's name,[96] but the text itself proclaims that he was a member of the flock of those whom today they usually call Augustinians. With this sham he strove to commend his brotherhood to the world by convincing people that the great man was the founder of the order and had himself received his black hood and leather belt from Ambrose, that he had long lived with these dear sons, that he had written a rule to those warmly beloved hermits,[97] that he had often visited them as pillars of religion, that he had preached so often among them, that he had written to them as he died.[98] They should have tacked on the additional fiction that, since he was speaking among uneducated hermits, he had chosen to speak neither learnedly nor in good Latin, the way that he speaks among his fellow citizens in his other homilies; but in one sermon he speaks as follows: 'Oh my brothers, though you are gross and do not understand subtleties,' etc.[99] Where does Augustine commit such a solecism that he says 'gross' instead of 'dense'?[100] But

* * * * *

96 Works falsely attributed to Augustine commonly circulated throughout the Middle Ages. Some spurious works were used by the Augustinian hermits as evidence that Augustine was a monk. Erasmus calls Maarten Lips' attention to Augustine's letter to Aurelius (letter 76) and sermons 52 and 53 (*Ad fratres in eremo,* found among sermons falsely attributed to Augustine); from these he asserts that 'Augustine was not a monk' and 'Monasticism he does not mention.' The seventy-six sermons falsely attributed to Augustine are found in PL 40 (1865) 1234–1358 (*Sermones ad fratres in eremo commorantes, et quosdam alios*). See Ep 901 to Maarten Lips, Louvain, c November 1518, especially lines 10–14. In his edition of Augustine's *Opera* (1529), Erasmus put the sermons in volumes IX and X: 'The tenth volume includes the homilies with various arguments, in which a great deal of the material is inauthentic [*permulta sunt aliena*], as also in the ninth volume.' See Ep 2157 to Alonso de Fonseca, Freiburg, (May) 1529, especially lines 555–6. See Chomarat ASD V-5 27 414n.

97 Erasmus himself was a member of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine (Order of Friars Hermits of St Augustine) at the monastery at Steyn (c 1487–92), and he remained an Augustinian canon and priest throughout his life, though he received a dispensation in 1517 from Pope Leo X for exclaustration and a modification of dress. See Rhenanus 36–7; Pope Leo X's letter(s) of 26 January 1517, Epp 517, 518, and 519; Schoeck (2) 140–8, especially 143.

98 The 'Rule of Saint Augustine' is letter 211; see especially George Lawless *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule* (Oxford 1987); the translation is also in NPNF 1st series 1 563–8. See also 'Regula' in *Augustine* 707–9 and 'Regula, Use after Augustine' ibidem 709–10.

99 See Psuedo-Augustine *Sermo XXII, De consolatione fratrum in eremo* PL 40 (1865) 1271–4: *O fratres mei, licet grossi sitis, et subtilia non capiatis* . . .

100 These spurious sermons are *Sermones ad fratres in eremo commorantes* (sermons 15, 18, 22, 24) PL 40 1235–1358. The Brepols Library of Latin Texts CLCLT

I suspect that they were 'gross' because they were drinking beer, for beer is also mentioned in these sermons by what I suspect was a Flemish Augustine, who begins some sermons with, 'For you ought to know, most beloved brothers' and 'For we have read, dearest brothers': he thought that 'for'[101] was an expletive conjunction that could be inserted anywhere for decoration. In the same place Augustine says 'moderns' instead of 'men of this age,' 'I know well' instead of 'I clearly understand,' and 'savorous' instead of 'sweet.'[102] But I'm a fool to look for solecisms here – for water in the sea, that is. Everywhere there is one remarkable barbarism after another, except in those passages that have been stitched on from other writers; for this artist has taken some themes from a life of Augustine and has woven in material from various passages of diverse authors, all of it in an ignorant and shameless manner. Observe the chicanery with which he has striven to make his chosen point convincing! First a speech of St Ambrose was concocted, who bestowed upon the new soldier a black hood and leather belt of the same colour, predicting also that many religious orders would arise from him.[103] Then, instead of the one rule that he did write for women,[104] they made three for men. These are followed by his venerable sermons, so passionate that it seems that Augustine was sick with an overpowering love for them, for he

* * * * *

database (CETEDOC), however, gives a few instances where Augustine uses the word 'gross' (*grossus, a, um*) as referring to a intellectual dullness in the sense Erasmus decries here; see eg *Tractatus in Evangelium Ioannis* CCSL 36 207:7–11: 'Fecit Deus Pater lucem; quam lucem aliam fecit Filius? Fecit Deus Pater firmamentum, caelum inter aquas et aquas, vidit eum Filius secundum intellegentiam [sic] tuam tardam et grossam; quia vidit Filius Patrem facientem firmamentum, et dixit: "non potest Filius a se facere quidquam, nisi quod viderit Patrem facientem," da mihi alterum firmamentum.' See also *Enarrationes in psalmos* 113 sermo 1.4 CCSL 40 1637:28–9 (*etiam grossa corda limavit*); and *Contra secundam Iuliani responsionem imperfectum opus* PL 45 (1865) 1209 (*quomodo erat consequens, o grosse dialectice?*).

101 Erasmus' Latin examples actually use two different words, *nanque* and *enim*, repeated here, which I have telescoped into the single English word 'for.' (Translator's note)

102 All the usages that Erasmus condemns are post-Classical: the coinage *modernus* (source of English 'modern'), *bene scio* for 'I know well' (in classical Latin *scio* means 'know how'), and *saporosus* (apparently not attested outside these sermons, to judge by Lewis and Short and the CLCLT database). (Translator's note)

103 See ASD V-5 29 436n.

104 See n98 above.

begins, 'My brothers and the joy of my heart, you who are my crown and my happiness,'[105] and soon he makes himself his brothers' mother and gives birth to them again because he has just praised them so much, in imitation of Paul of course.[106] And, so that there is no room left for doubt, he begins one sermon[107] with, 'As you well know, dearest brothers, by the grace of God I was counted worthy of the distinction of constructing three monasteries at Hippona in honour of the Holy Trinity. The first of them is this one, in which through many years now you dwell cheerfully, content with modest fodder, associated to beasts, ministered of birds'; and then 'And so I am not unhappy, but you are accustomed often to the conversations of angels. Another monastery too has been built in the garden that our Holy Father Valerius gave me. And since I was made a presbyter bishop and have not always been able to live here with you nor with the brothers who were put in the aforementioned monastery, therefore I have wanted to have a monastery of clerics with me under the house of the bishop,' etc. This is what he says there. Does Augustine not seem to have made a remarkable change in his language from his contact with those 'gross brothers'? I would grant that it was by scribal error that 'Hippona' was said instead of 'Hippo' and 'under the house' instead of 'within the house' – if the rest of the sermon did not reveal the same elegance, for example, his phrase 'ministered of birds,' meaning 'fed by the ministration of birds,' alluding to Paul whom they claim as the first hermit.[108] But where is that vast wasteland around Hippo in which they needed the ministration of birds because of the scarcity of men? And who has heard of that wondrous company, which often chatted with angels, when the unhappy Augustine was denied this same thing? Moreover, how did it happen that Augustine mentions these three monasteries, built in honour of the Trinity, neither in his *Confessions* nor anywhere else? Posidonius[109] writes that he founded several associations, not of monks but of

* * * * *

105 Pseudo-Augustine *Sermo primus, De institutione vitae regularis* PL 40 (1865) 1235.

106 Cf Gal 4:19: 'My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you . . .'

107 Pseudo-Augustine *Sermo XIV, De justitia et correctione fraterna* PL 40 (1865) 1257: 'Ut bene nostis, fratres charissimi, tria monasteria apud Hipponem Dei gratia merui laudabiliter ad honorem sanctae Trinitatis construere . . .'

108 Erasmus refers here to Jerome's *Vita sancti Pauli* (*Life of Paulus the First Hermit*) NPNF 2nd series 6 299–303; PL 23 (1883) 17–30. Jerome recounts this miraculous ministration by a raven (301).

109 Posidonius (= Possidius) wrote a *Life of Augustine*; for Possidius' work, see book 2 622 n809. See especially Eva Elm *Die Macht der Weisheit: das Bild des Bischofs in der 'Vita Augustini' des Possidius und anderen spätantiken und frümittelalterlichen*

people who served Christ in harmony, though he calls them hospices. There is another sermon, number twenty-one,[110] in which the Holy Father Jerome is cited as having written that there were three kinds of monks, of which he approved two, the hermits and cenobites, and disapproved of the third, in which two or three shared a common life without a father. But Jerome calls the first kind anchorites rather than hermits, for cenobites lived in the desert no less than anchorites, except that several lived under a common father and deans; but they made them hermits rather than anchorites to render more honourable the title that they adopted,[111] and it was by these holy monks that Augustine received the light and turned to godliness. Such witless sermons won a leading place among Augustine's tracts, with an elaborate index, carefully explained with marginal notes; some of them are cited in papal decrees.[112] In addition, there are the deceptive depictions in which

* * * * *

Bischofsviten Studies in the History of Christian Thought (Leiden 2003) 105–59.

110 Pseudo-Augustine *Sermo XXI, De triplici genere monachorum in Aegypto* PL 40 (1865) 1268–71

111 Jerome Ep 22.34–5 *Ad Eustochium* (*To Eustochium*) CSEL 54 196–200, NPNF 2nd series 6 37–8. Never mentioning the word 'hermits' (*eremitae*), Jerome ranks the order 'of monks in Egypt' as coenobites ('men living in community'), anchorites ('who live in the desert, each man by himself, and are so called because they have withdrawn from human society'), and Remnuoth (monks living under no rule, 'a very inferior and little regarded type'). Erasmus charges these (Augustinian) forgers of Augustine's sermons with changing the word Jerome uses, 'anchorites' (*anachoretae*), to 'hermits' (*eremitae*): 'They made [*fecerunt*] them hermits rather than anchorites' to give the Order of the Hermits of St Augustine 'a more honourable title' – and no doubt apostolic origins. Sermon 21 asks rhetorically: 'What are those two that are proclaimed the best but the type and order of hermits and coenobites whose most illustrious life and sacred congregation takes its origin from the time of the apostolic preaching?' Likewise the forger(s) expands on the profound influence Augustine claims that these 'hermits' had on his spiritual progress (*per quos etiam illuminari merui*); see PL 40 1268. Jerome's own preference is for coenobitic monks, for whom his praises go on at length – he defers speaking on anchorites, though he acknowledges their way of life: 'Paul [the Hermit] introduced this way of life; Antony made it famous, and – to go farther back still – John the Baptist set the first example of it.' Twisting Jerome's words, which now state that Paul (Paul of Thebes c 340), was the first (Christian) hermit, allows the forger to place the origins of Christian hermits (and thereby the origins of the Order of the Hermits of St Augustine) back in the apostolic age, so laying claim to pre-eminence and honour.

112 Chomarat gives as example *Decreti pars secunda* Causa XII Q. I 'Whether clerics may have anything of their own'; c X 'For clerics all things should be held in common'; Augustine is cited: 'Augustine in his sermon on the common life

Augustine, with a beard down to his groin, a black hood and robe, and a leather belt three fingers wide, holds in his right hand a book that begins, 'Before all, dearest brothers, let God be loved'; around his feet is a chorus of Augustinians in similar panoply.[113]

I am not attacking the word 'monk,' which would be popular with all good people if the character of many of them had not made it odious.[114] Moreover, I would tolerate monastic brotherhoods commending their institution with invented origins, some boasting of Elisha as founder,[115] others of Bridget,[116] others of Augustine, others of Bruno,[117] if only they imitated the

* * * * *

of clerics' (= Pseudo-Augustine *Sermones ad fratres in eremo commorantes, sermo* 52) PL 187 (1861) 886; also found cited is *Sermo* 55. See ASD V-5 29 474n.

113 Like many of his contemporaries, Erasmus senses the anachronisms and other errors in depicting the saints, passages from Scripture, pious legends, and other stories from the past. For the 'sense of anachronism' among humanists of the Renaissance, see Peter Burke 'The Sense of Anachronism from Petrarch to Poussin' in *Time in the Medieval World* ed Chris Humphrey and W.M. Ormrod (Suffolk, UK 2001) 157–73, and Peter Burke *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (New York 1969).

114 See Erasmus' comments on monks in *Moria* CWE 27 130–5. See also Rummel *Monachatus*.

115 The Carmelites considered the prophet Elisha and Elijah, whose home was on Mount Carmel, and John the Baptist as a models of the spiritual life of the Order of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, which was founded in the late twelfth century and lived according to the Rule of St Albert, the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem. The General Chapter of 1399 declared that Elijah's feast be celebrated. For Elijah and Elisha, see 1 Kings 17–19, 21; 2 Kings 1–9, 13; Elisha is also mentioned in Luke 4:27; and for these prophets as models of the monastic life, see Ambrose *De fuga saeculi* CSEL 32/2 189: 'Ergo paenitentia fuga est bona, gratia Dei fuga est bona, in qua est adsumptio fugientis, desertum fuga est bona, ad quod fugit Helias, Helisaeus, Johannes Baptista.' See also 'Carmelites' ODCC 289–90; *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* 4 564–7; and Andrew Jotischky *The Carmelites and Antiquity: Mendicants and Their Pasts in the Middle Ages* (Oxford and New York 2002). For Erasmus' encounters with members of the Carmelite order, some of whom openly attacked him, see the index for CWE 4–8; see eg CWE 4 119 for Erasmus' words on the 'libellous Carmelite' and n29; CWE 5 73 for his comments on the Carmelite Jean Briselot, the king's confessor; and Nicolaas Baechem of Egmond with whom Erasmus had many conflicts and named *Camelita* 'the Camel' for his obtuseness; see CEBR I 81–3. See especially H.Th. van Veen 'Erasmus on the "Carmelite Taboo"' *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 43/2 (1981) 335–9.

116 St Bridget of Sweden (1303–73), founder of the Bridgettine Order; see *Moria* CWE 27 131. See also ODCC 237–8.

117 St Bruno (1032–1101), founder of the Carthusian Order (1084) at the Grande-Chartreuse; from there the movement spread to other places throughout

devotion of those in whose titles they glory, but there are too many things that have crept into Christianity through similar impostures. Whether it was politeness or whether it was carelessness, it was pernicious on the part of those who first turned a blind eye to these things, for it is to them that we owe the fact that we have the principal Doctors of the church, both Greek and Latin, mutilated, corrupted, disordered, and contaminated with ignorant rubbish. But that recklessness did not stop with them; their effrontery has extended, unpunished, right to the holy books themselves, and no one complains about these charlatans, while I am flayed with slanders for any correct observation I may make: but I'm getting too carried away.

To return briefly. Though Augustine did go into retreat on occasion, as many scholars do for the sake of study, he was never a hermit monk, though they have pretended that he professed it in a sermon.[118] Nor did he himself prescribe a particular form of dress to others; he only advises young women who lived under his sister's care not to make themselves remarkable in their attire, a fault to which this sort is inclined, and adds, 'Strive to please not by your clothes but by your character.'[119] Nor did he himself make any innovation in bishops' garb except that, for modesty's sake, he was unwilling to wear the *pyrrhon*, a red cap, as he himself shows in a sermon before a congregation, saying, 'It befits a bishop but does not befit Augustine'; had he been a monk, he would have said, 'It befits a bishop but does not befit a monk.'[120] In fact it is clear from Augustine's own writings that the rule that many monastic brotherhoods, which profess neither Benedict's nor Francis' rule, claim for themselves was not written for clerics or for hermits or even for men, but for young women who, as I said, were serving God under his sister's care; they changed a few words to adapt it to men.[121] The proof that

* * * * *

Europe. See ODCC 245. For Erasmus' view of St Bruno and the original Carthusians, see CWE 84 1977 n542.

118 See Pseudo-Augustine *Sermones ad fratres in eremo commorantes, sermo* 14 PL 40 (1865) 1257.

119 Augustine *Letter* 211.10 WSA II-4 19–28, especially 23

120 See Augustine *De vita et moribus clericorum suorum II, sermo* 356 (13) in WSA III-10 179: 'I am offered, for example, a very expensive cloak [*birrus*], perhaps it would be suitable for a bishop to wear it, although it isn't suitable for Augustine to do so, that is to say a poor man, born of poor parents.' Latin text in *Sancti Aurelii Augustini sermones selecti duodeviginti* ed C. Lambot, Stromata Patristica et Mediaevalia 1 (Utrecht 1950) 132–43.

121 In Ep 899 to Maarten Lips (Louvain, c November 1518), Erasmus expresses his strong belief that 'that rule under which you live comes from anywhere rather than Augustine.' See CWE 6 184 n31, which notes that Erasmus 'thought

they were indeed not nuns is perhaps the fact that they had the freedom to leave their association and that any incorrigible one was compelled to go elsewhere. Nor were they all virgins; some had children. Nor does he ever call them nuns or his clerics monks. He even allowed them to betake themselves to other bishops with whom clerics had greater freedom; 'I would rather a weak one than a dead one,'[122] he said. But someone who now withdraws from monastic vows is not weak but more than dead, and indeed he is dead, since he withdraws not for necessity's sake but from love of the world. Besides, every place removed from crowds of people, whether in the country or in the city, used once to be called a 'monastery.'[123]

But to the subject, the person who forged those sermons under Augustine's name not only exclaims, 'Oh, oh, oh' in the middle but often begins with, 'Oh dearest brothers, how fearful is that day,'[124] 'Oh dearest brothers, oh if you knew how necessary obedience is for you when you live in solitude,'[125] 'Oh dearest brothers, my joy and crown in the Lord.'[126] So many of his sermons to the people are extant: when did that man, who was both sane and level-headed, ever begin this way? In fact, where does he exclaim pointlessly in this way even in the middle of a sermon? Perhaps that was appropriate for satirists, though Horace, the most admired of all, begins with tempered astonishment – 'How does it happen, Maecenas?' – in order to retain no trace of Old Comedy, to which satire was the heir.[127] Thus Aristophanes, ὡς ἀργαλέον πρᾶγμ' ἐστίν [How rough a business

* * * * *

that only the letter [211 of Augustine] was genuine.' The Rule of St Augustine was in fact a letter laying down rules for the women of his sister's monastery, not written as a rule for men. Among the men's religious orders that have taken the 'Rule of Augustine' as the basis for their own institutions are the Premonstratensians, Dominicans, and, of course, the Augustinians. Women's religious orders such as the Canonesses Regular of St Augustine, the Bridgettines, Dominicans, Ursulines, and Visitation Nuns also adopted the rule. See 'Regula, Use after Augustine' *Augustine* 709–10.

122 Augustine *Sermo* 356, *De vita et moribus clericorum suorum* II (14) WSA III-10 180; PL 39 (1865) 1580.

123 The Greek root of the word 'monastery' is *monos* meaning 'solitary' or 'alone': the monastery was a place where one was 'alone.' See Bowersock *Late Antiquity* 'Monasticism,' 'Monks, Image of' and 'Monks, Status of' 583–6. See Erasmus' comments on monasteries 622–4 above.

124 Pseudo-Augustine *Sermo* 251 PL 39 (1865) 2210 and *Sermo* 63 PL 40 (1865) 1347

125 Pseudo-Augustine *Sermo* 2 PL 40 (1865) 1257

126 Pseudo-Augustine *Sermo ad fratres in eremo commorantes. Sermo primus. De institutione vitae regularis* PL 40 (1865) 1235: *Fratres mei et laetitia cordis mei, corona mea et gaudium meum quod estis* . . .

127 Erasmus' source for Roman satire as successor to Greek Old Comedy (missed

it is]. Sometimes New Comedy also adopts this: 'What am I to do then? I'm dead, I'm done for.'[128] Imitating this all too well, Persius says, 'Oh human cares, oh what a great emptiness there is in things,'[129] Juvenal, somewhat more temperately, 'Am I always to be only a listener?',[130] but he corrupted satire and turned it into tragic invective.

There are other faults as well into which some fall in their unfortunate affectation of preconceived notions about artistry or figures of speech. Indeed, it would not be without benefit to relate them now, but it would be quite long and perhaps even invidious. Yet what I have touched upon so far without insulting anybody should not cause offence if it is helpful to everyone and harms no one. So much for vocal delivery.

There remains *distinctio* [changes],[131] which must also be varied in accordance with the nature of the sentiments.[132] This is observed in writing as well.[133] The shortest pause has a *hypostigme* [a slight stop],[134] a slightly

* * * * *

by Chomarat) is undoubtedly Horace *Satires* 1.4; earlier in this sentence Erasmus quotes *Satires* 1.1.1. (Translator's note)

128 'What am I to do then?' (*Quid igitur faciam?*): Terence *Eunuchus* 46. The second half of the line, 'I'm dead, I'm done for,' is taken (inaccurately) from Plautus *Aulularia* 713: 'I'm ruined, I'm killed, I'm murdered' (*Perii interii occidi*).

129 Persius *Satires* 1.1

130 Juvenal *Satires* 1.1

131 For *distinctio* 'changes or separation, both oral (pauses) and written (punctuation),' see Quintilian 9.1.33: 'Slight changes [*distinctio*] and alterations may be made in words, the same word may be repeated sometimes at the beginning of a sentence and sometimes at the end, or the sentence may be made to open and close with the same phrase.' See also 9.3.65 and 82; and Lausberg §§660–2. This rhetorical term and the ones following pose enormous problems for any translator. See the translator's note in the Loeb edition of Quintilian where Quintilian introduces these terms: 'The long list of technical terms which follows provides almost insuperable difficulty to the translator, since many can neither be translated nor even paraphrased with certainty. Quintilian himself is not always certain as to their meaning: see IX.iii.90'; Quintilian *Istitutio oratoria* trans H.E. Butler, Loeb Classical Library 126 (Cambridge, Mass 1986) III 366 n1.

132 See Quintilian 9.3.65 and 11.3.35–9; Cicero *De oratore* 3.48.186.

133 On pauses in writing using punctuation, see Erasmus *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 465–6. In discussing pauses in delivery, Erasmus uses the technical Greek and Latin terms for the various divisions of a sentence: Greek *cola* and *commata* and Latin *articulus*, *incisum*, *membrum*. For the definition of these terms see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.19.26–7.

134 For *hypostigme* (ὑποστιγμή), see Quintilian 11.3.35: 'It is also necessary to note at what point our speech should pause and be momentarily suspended (which the Greeks term ὑποδιαστολή and ὑποστιγμή) and when it should come to a full stop.'

longer one a *stigme*, which we indicate with two dots. An even longer one than this has a single dot. The longest has a mark in which the lower dot is curved towards the left. Authors, however, disagree on the marks, but it makes no great difference. The *hypostigme* suits individual asyndeta[135] of which each one has the force of a single unit [*articulus*] or short phrase [*incisum*]; for example, 'Here for nights on end there is eating, drinking, vomiting, dancing, gaming, rutting,' and likewise, 'You have in a single man many men to imitate: a philosopher, a priest, a monk, a bishop.' These lose their elegance if you run them together. A parenthesis needs to be separated from its context not only by a short breath but also by lowering the voice a little; for example, 'They say that Circe (to include something from mythology) was in the habit of using potions to turn men into swine and other types of brute animals.'[136] The same happens after the vocative case, as in 'Tityrus, you reclining.'[137] I shall leave to the grammarians the rather subtle and fine points that Quintilian imparts here;[138] our business is with the preacher. And a slightly greater interval is required by short phrases [*incisa*], especially if there is no conjunction, the omission of which adds a certain energy; for example, 'He squandered his inheritance, prostituted his modesty, lost his reputation, hurt his parents, alienated his friends.' Clauses are marked by a slightly longer pause, such as, 'Since this whole life is brief, since it is uncertain for everyone, since it is prey to so many ills, I am astonished that there are so many who are so afraid of death, heap up wealth, put off the correction of their life.' In this, however, there is some difference; the more important clause requires a slightly longer silence, that is, before 'I am astonished.' Perhaps someone will feel that all of this is a single unit [*membrum*], the rest only short phrases [*commata*]; but so be it, since the same consideration applies to phrases among which one is more important than the rest. Certainly a period requires a more extended interval. Often an *interrogatio* [application of a question] also allows this; for example, 'You have

* * * * *

135 Quintilian 9.3.50: '. . . owing to the absence of connecting particles, is called dissolution [*asyndeton*], and is useful when we are speaking with special vigour . . .'

136 See Homer *Odyssey* 10.230–43; and 'Circe' in *Classical Tradition* 200–1.

137 Erasmus quotes only the first three words of the opening line of Virgil's *Eclogues* 1.1: *Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi* 'Tityrus, you, reclining beneath the protection of the spreading beech.' Reproducing Virgil's word order is a challenge to any English translator. Here Erasmus'main point is the pause after the vocative. See also *Georgics* 4.566 *Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi*.

138 Quintilian 11.3.35–9

heard a complex question. But how shall we unravel this difficulty?'[139] Errors are committed in this area too by many who deliberately strive to have their speech roll on in a steady tone as if it were a disgrace ever to be silent, maintaining the sound, as trumpeters do, until the breath gives out; and so it often happens that they take a breath where the sense offers no room for breath. No less in error are those who, as I began to say earlier, interpose a break after every one or two words, not without annoying the audience. Some cough or spit after delivering part of their sermon; you would sooner approve their performance than that of those who have the misguided habit of constantly coughing or spitting. At a similar interval some draw a loud sigh from the depths of their belly as though tired of speaking; and yet sighing is foolish when the subject contains nothing that merits a groan. Those who do not draw in their breath but suck it back in through their teeth also earn criticism. When a statement requires the voice to be sustained for a long period, breath should be drawn first; this should be done silently whenever phrases and clauses allow time for a breath.

So much for voice. I come now to the face,[140] in which the mind is so clearly expressed that it frequently serves in place of speech, for we assent, dissent, sometimes even greet, threaten, and summon by moving the head; we signify confidence by raising it, bashfulness or hesitation by lowering it. Yet it is unseemly for a serious man to speak while frequently moving his head; whirling the hair is downright fanatical.

The brow as well gives considerable expression to the mind; hence in colloquial expressions the cheerful are said to smooth their brow,[141] the sad to furrow it, and we speak of the 'effrontery'[142] of those who lack shame.

The eyebrows are no less active: they show arrogance when raised (whence the criticism of the 'supercilious'),[143] modesty when lowered, sternness when knitted, severity joined with gentleness when uneven.[144] Strict fathers are introduced in comedies this way, with one eyebrow raised, the

* * * * *

139 For *interrogatio*, see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.15.22; and Lausberg §§767–70.

140 See Quintilian 11.3.72–81: 'By far the greatest influence is exercised by the face' (*Dominatur autem maxime vultus*).

141 For 'to smooth their brow,' see *Adagia* I viii 48 *Frontem exporrigere. Frontem contrahere* 'To smooth the forehead. To wrinkle the forehead'; see also *Adagia* I viii 49 *Attollere supercilium, ponere supercilium* 'To raise the brows, to relax the brows.'

142 Erasmus uses the adjective *effrontes*, which incorporates Latin *frons* 'brow.' (Translator's note)

143 'Supercilious,' from *supercilium* 'eyebrow.' (Translator's note)

144 Quintilian 11.3.78–9

other steady: though this gesture would be unbecoming for a preacher, since Cicero criticizes Piso because he said in the Senate, with one eyebrow raised to his forehead, the other lowered towards his eyes, that he did not like cruelty.[145]

But here the eyes take the starring role; the mind is said to dwell in them because there is no emotion – love, hate, joy, grief, annoyance, concern, fear, hope, innocence, deceit, suspicion – that is not expressed in the eyes. The character of the eyes is often described in Holy Scripture too. Sitting on the mount, gazing upon the crowd, the Lord asks for attention as though he were about to speak of something difficult.[146] Delighted by the wealthy youth's answer, he gazed upon him.[147] Denied three times by Peter, he used his eyes' gaze to remind him of his unfulfilled promise, 'Even if I must die with you, I shall not deny you.'[148] He also thanks his Father with his eyes raised towards heaven.[149] Likewise in Acts, Peter fixes his eyes upon a turbulent crowd in order to calm it, displaying his authority and confidence.[150] Jerome relates of St Paula that, whenever she had seen one of her troop of maidens too slow to her duties or dressed too alluringly, she used to correct her not with a rebuke but with her eyes and the sadness of her face.[151] I myself attended a banquet in Italy where the host, in order not to interrupt the cheerful conversation by giving instruction or criticisms to his servants, did everything with his eyes; whether he wanted the courses changed or more wine served or more food brought, he gazed at a servant, then turned his eyes to a cup or to a loaf or something else that he wanted done.[152] But here too one should avoid as far as possible anything that is unnatural, for the eyes are condemned if they are fixed,[153] widened, droopy, lethargic, bewildered, lusty, shifty, and almost

* * * * *

145 Cicero *In Pisonem* 6.14
146 Cf Matt 5:1 (the Sermon on the Mount).
147 Mark 10:21; Luke 18:24
148 Matt 26:35; Luke 22:61
149 John 17:1, 11:41
150 Presumably this is the account of Peter's speech on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14–40), but Acts makes no mention of Peter fixing his eyes (*defigit in illam oculos*).
151 Jerome Ep 108.20 NPNF 2nd series 6 206. The passage reads rather the opposite: 'If she chanced to notice any sister too attentive to her dress, she reproved her for her error with knitted brows and severe looks, saying, "a clean body and a clean dress mean an unclean soul . . ."'
152 Erasmus visited Italy in 1506–9; see Schoeck (2) 62–73.
153 Quintilian 11.3.72–81

swimming as though some pleasure were welling up, something that Persius condemns in a poet giving a public reading,[154] saying, 'With a languishing roll of a wanton eye';[155] sidelong glances, that is with eyes half shut, the kind that lions object to having cast upon them, are also condemned,[156] likewise the ones that Quintilian calls 'Venus,'[157] for the ancients depicted Venus with squinting eyes, a fault that you could find even today in some who make their eyes sidelong and squinty whenever they strive to appear more appealing. On the other hand, excessively wide eyes show stupidity. The practice of certain Italians, who look at someone with astonished eyes if they want to appear to show him reverence, is not for the preacher.[158] Some have the unseemly practice of twisting their eyes to the side, but the behaviour of those who shut their eyes when they speak is more unseemly; I suppose that this is their way of treating their shyness, which is said to be in the eyes and clouds the mind if immoderate, but if moderate, confers both grace and credibility upon the speaker: this is the kind that they say was in the orator Lucius Crassus.[159] This manifests itself especially below the eyes and in the cheeks by a welling up of the blood, the retreat of which creates pallor,[160] as tends to happen to some in fear and in violent anger.

* * * * *

154 Persius *Satires* 1.18

155 I have adapted this version from Conington's translation of Persius and have checked this with that of Gildersleeve; see Persius *Satires* 1.18 in *The Satires of A. Persius Flaccus* trans John Conington, ed H. Nettleship (Oxford 1893) 6–7; and *The Satires of A. Persius Flaccus* ed Basil L. Gildersleeve (New York 1875) 40 and 82 (notes on the passage). (Translator's note)

156 See Pliny *Naturalis historia* 8.19.52: 'Lions are devoid of craft and suspicion, and they do not look at you with eyes askance and dislike being looked at in a similar way.'

157 Quintilian does not use the term 'Venus [eyes]' ([*oculi*] *venerei*); cf Quintilian 9.3.76. Erasmus might be recalling Ovid *Ars amatoria* 2.659: 'If squint-eyes, let her be like Venus' (*Si straba, sit Veneri similis*). See Varro *Menippeae* 344.

158 Parallel to this, of course, are the many art works that portray amazement of the beholders in the presence of divinity, majesty, magnificent undertakings (*magnifica*), etc. The preacher, Erasmus cautions, is not to adopt this expression since he is the one who must command authority.

159 Cicero *De oratore* 1.26.122: 'There was a marvellous kind of modesty about Crassus, though this was so far from being any disadvantage to his oratory, as positively to help it, by bearing witness to his integrity.'

160 Quintilian 9.3.78: 'The only thing which has greater influence over it [the eyebrows] is the blood, which moves in conformity with the emotions that control the mind . . .'

Now, even in the nose there is some indication of emotions.[161] The release of breath from it indicates anger; hence Theocritus' phrase about Pan, δρυμεῖα χολὴ ἐπὶ ῥινὶ κάθηται [sharp anger sits upon the nose],[162] and likewise Plautus' 'Hunger and delay throw bile into the nose.'[163] Mockers wrinkle the nose, whence Pliny says that this part of the face is devoted to mockery,[164] and Horace, 'You suspend upon a hooked nose.'[165] Some emit snorts when angry or threatening, but there is nothing in these to suit a preacher.

And not much more in the cheeks, which display arrogance when puffed out, characterize the sad and despondent when they sag; hence Cain hears, 'Why has your face fallen?'[166] Indeed, laughter too should be infrequent and controlled in a preacher,[167] far different from a guffaw and what

* * * * *

161 Quintilian 9.3.80

162 'Sharp [reading δρυμεῖα] anger sits upon the nose' (Theocritus *Idylls* 1.18); Erasmus' text, however, gives δρυμεῖα, a *vox nihili*, which is either a slip of the memory or a misprint for δριμεῖα, 'sharp' (the two words would, however, be pronounced the same in modern Greek). (Translator's note)

163 See *Adagia* II viii 60; see also CWE 34 341 60n: '*Collectanea* no 179, citing line 81 of a spurious passage added to Plautus *Amphitryo* in the 15th century ...'

164 Pliny *Naturalis historia* 11.59.158: 'In man only stands the nose, which modern fashion has made the organ of sly mockery.'

165 Horace *Satires* 1.6.5: 'Maecenas, do not, like most of the world, curl up your nose at men of unknown birth, men like myself, a freedman's son.' The meaning of the bold Horatian phrase is 'you hang [someone] from a turned up nose.' The comic idea is that a snort of contempt creates a hook on which the victim is suspended. (A. Dalzell) See *Adagia* I viii 22 *Naso suspendere* 'To turn up the nose.'

166 Gen 4:6

167 Erasmus reservedly follows Quintilian and Cicero on the subject of laughter. See Quintilian 6.3.1–112 who accepts the role of laughter in forensic oratory, arguing that it 'dispels the graver emotions of the judge ... frequently diverts his attention from the facts of the case ...' (6.3.1). But he acknowledges that it is 'hard ... to attain success in this connection ...' (6.3.1). Quintilian devotes a lengthy section to the topic and sees its usefulness, as well as dangers, in a wide variety of settings. See also Cicero *De oratore* 2.54.216–90. Early Christian tradition seems set against humour and laughter: Christ is said never to have laughed, nor did the apostles, saints, etc. Chomarat notes that some Fathers condemned it as having origins with the devil; ASD V-5 37 628n. Laughter was later given some allowance by the scholastics, who distinguished between a '*risus modicus* (permitted outside places of worship, except in times of penance) and immoderate laughing, forbidden at all times'; see ASD V-5 37 628n; also Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia IIae q 38 a 1. Cf *De copia* CWE 24 654–7 where he talks about 'pleasure derived from the milder emotions ...' See also Jean Verdon *Rire au Moyen Âge* ([Paris] c 2001); and book 2 505–9.

the Greeks call *συγκρούσιος* [immoderate mirth];[168] and sardonic laughter,[169] which bares the teeth, is no less inappropriate. Either nature or a bad habit has shaped some people so that they say nothing without a laugh. I myself know a man, praiseworthy on all accounts, in whom you would have been able to criticize hardly anything except the fact that he tacked on a laugh to every sentence of his speech. I know another, who I think is still among the living, who is in the habit of laughing whenever he is going to say something novel in an address, so that those who have observed his habit expect something unusual.

In the opening and closing of the lips, as in laughter as well, moderation should be observed so that the motion is no greater than clear pronunciation of the words demands.[170] I have seen some who were immoderate in this regard and mooed out the letter u with an excessively long projection of the lips. On the other hand, some speak with their lips half shut, a fault that you might detect in the Dutch, at least in those who have not unlearned their native pronunciation. Some talk with their whole face [*vultu*], whence we say they are 'making faces' [*vultuosi*], and they would even move their ears if nature had not made them immobile; many dumb animals display feelings by the movement of their ears. I come now to the gestures of the remainder of the body.[171]

Raising the neck moderately, if done in its place, is not inappropriate, nor is lowering it to the shoulders; tilting it towards one shoulder is silly, though some mean this as an indication of devotion. It is even sillier to twist it alternately to the right and to the left.

Extending the arms is not criticized any time the sentiment demands it, and those who always keep their hand under their cloak are criticized on the grounds that they never become excited when they speak. I have seen some who were constantly extending, or rather tossing, both arms as far as they could to left and right, with the hands extended, then bringing them together in the same motion to produce a clear sound by the collision of the palms, all accompanied by a noisy voice and gesticulation of the whole body.[172]

* * * * *

168 *συγκρούσιος* 'laughter accompanied by clapping of the hands, immoderate mirth' LSJ

169 For 'sardonic laughter' (*risus Sardonius*), see *Adagia* III V 1 *Risus Sardonicus* 'A sardonic laugh.'

170 See Quintilian 11.3.81: 'It is also an ugly habit to protrude the lips, open them with a sudden smack, compress them . . .'

171 See Quintilian 11.3.82–3.

172 Quintilian 11.3.84

Among physical gestures the hands are the most eloquent.[173] Some of these are common to all peoples. For example, we demand silence by moving the right hand. Likewise, we move our hand to our breast when talking about ourselves,[174] towards those whom we are discussing when speaking about others, the same way that in the Gospel the Lord extended a hand towards his disciples when he was going to say about them, 'These are my brothers and mother and sister,'[175] and we use the index finger in place of the pronouns 'this' and 'that.'[176] We use the hand to summon, to reject, or to drive away.[177] We impose silence by putting a finger to the lips. Perhaps another common habit is that of beating the breast with the hand as a sign of penitence or striking the thigh in amazement.[178] At Judges 15 we read that the Philistines laid the calf of the leg upon their thigh in amazement.[179] The practice that some follow today of kissing the hand in respect is an ancient custom.[180] On the other hand, there are some gestures formerly common, now unknown. For who now recognizes the gesture that Quintilian attests was the most common of all in his day, in which the middle finger is drawn against the thumb with the other three extended.[181] He says that it suits exordia if it goes moderately in either direction with a gentle motion while the head and shoulders follow slightly in concert in the same direction as the hand; that it is also appropriate to the credibility of the narration if the movement is a little more drawn out; if it is extended further and

* * * * *

173 Quintilian 11.3.85–7

174 Quintilian 11.3.89

175 Luke 8:19–21. In Luke, Jesus refers only to his 'mother and brothers'; in Matt 12:48–50 Jesus, 'pointing to his disciples, said, "Here are my mother and my brothers . . ."' There is no gospel passage where Jesus uses the combination of 'brothers and mother and sister.' Erasmus, however, supplies the words in *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 207, where Jesus proclaims: '"If you truly want to know my kinsmen, and those who are dearest to me, these people are my mother, my sisters, my brothers . . . Whoever obeys the will of my Father, who is in heaven, this is my mother, this is my sister, this is my brother."' The word 'sisters' does not appear in *Paraphrasis in Lucam* LB VII 362F–363A.

176 Erasmus lists three Latin pronouns, *hic*, *iste*, and *ille*, roughly 'this one here,' 'that one by you,' and 'that one over there.' (Translator's note)

177 Quintilian 11.3.86

178 Quintilian 11.3.123

179 Judg 15:8 DV; cf Vulg *Percussitque eos ingenti plaga, ita ut, stupentes, suram femori imponerent*. Modern Hebrew scholars render this biblical verse quite differently from the Vulgate translation, which Erasmus follows.

180 See Pliny *Naturalis historia* 28.5.25.

181 Quintilian 11.3.92

more freely, its keenness and insistence suits in rebuke and in argument. Let this one stand as an example; for Quintilian, with an almost excessive thoroughness, describes countless gestures of the hands and fingers, which there is no point in mentioning here.[182] It is clear that it was once very common to indicate favour by lowering the thumb,[183] to touch the ears of those whom they wanted to be their witnesses and to remember them,[184] to touch the chin and knees of those they supplicated,[185] since none of these is particularly remote from present experience. But just as these have passed out of practice, so some that antiquity did not know have been adopted, such as when we express amazement or revulsion by making the sign of the cross in front of the face with the right hand; when we make it towards others, we are blessing them or saying farewell. To mark the divisions of an argument on the fingers in the manner of Hortensius was not always a disgrace,[186] for I think that worshipping or invoking God with hands joined and raised was an ancient custom. And it will not be appropriate always to raise the index finger towards heaven whenever heaven is named or to lower it whenever the earth is named; yet it will be fitting sometimes, whenever the emotion demands it. A certain mime is said to have committed a solecism with his hand because he pointed to the earth when naming the sky and pointed to the sky when naming the earth.[187] It is unseemly to rub the face with the left hand as though wiping away shame,[188] to wrinkle the nose or wipe it unnecessarily,[189] or to scratch the head. These gestures are faulted because they are slow and laggard and suggest contempt for the

* * * * *

182 Quintilian 11.3.92–105

183 Pliny *Naturalis historia* 28.5.25: 'There is even a proverb that bids us turn down [*pollices . . . premere*] our thumbs to show approval.' See *Adagia* I viii 46 *Premere pollicem. Convertere pollicem* 'Thumbs down. Thumbs up.' See 976 below.

184 See Virgil *Eclogues* 6.3.4: '. . . the Cythian plucked my ear and warned me . . .' The ear was believed to be the seat of memory; Capurnius Siculus *Eclogues* 4.155; *Adagia* I vii 40 *Aurum vellere* 'To pluck by the ear.'

185 See Homer *Iliad* 1.500–2. This is Thetis' gesture in supplicating Zeus for his help in vindicating her son Achilles: 'So she sat down in front of him, and laid hold of his knees with her left hand, while with her right she clasped him beneath the chin . . .'

186 Quintilian 4.5.24

187 See Philostratus *Vitae Sophistarum* 1.542. Polemo, president of the Olympic games at Smyrna, made this remark of a tragic actor (ἀγωνιστοῦ δὲ τραγῳδίας) and then expelled him from the contest. The story is told 'to illustrate the charming wit' of Polemo. Erasmus recalls the perpetrator of the 'solecism with his hand' as 'a certain mime' (*mimus quidam*).

188 Quintilian 11.3.160

189 Quintilian 11.3.80

subject and the listener, like gazing at the ceiling, or looking up at the vault of a basilica or some statue, or some other similar habits that are generally peculiar to the individual, so that you could scarcely find anyone so well ordered by nature or by art that you could not find some sort of blemish at which to take offence.[190] As to what Quintilian says about how some toss their arms now to the back, now to the side, so that it is unsafe to stand nearby,[191] the elevation of the pulpit now frees the preacher from that danger. What does pertain to the preacher is their instruction that the hands not be raised above the breast or dropped below the belt.[192] Yet I myself saw someone who stretched both hands far above his head while raising his eyes on high when he cited God as witness of what he was saying, and sometimes his robe slipped down and bared his arms. But there is nothing that is not seemly whenever a powerful and seasonable emotion demands it. Raising the right hand aloft and shaking it as a sign of happiness is a military gesture.

The pulpit conceals most physical movements below the belt, like extreme splaying of the feet[193] or excessive contraction or distention of the belly,[194] and prevents others, like walking about or darting forward.[195] And there is no need here of the rope that Cassius Severus demanded against those who were carried away with their excessive fire and darted towards the other side's platform.[196] He also forbids striking the thigh in indignation or grief, a practice which, according to Quintilian, Cleon was the first to introduce among the Athenians,[197] and its adoption by the Romans does not meet with criticism in the eyes of the learned. This gesture seems to have

* * * * *

190 See Quintilian 11.3.160.
191 See Quintilian 11.3.118.
192 See Quintilian 11.3.112–13.
193 See Quintilian 11.3.125.
194 See Quintilian 11.3.122.
195 Quintilian 11.3.125–6. Erasmus' remarks on the pulpit suggest its practical function in restraining excesses of this sort lest scandal be given to the audience.
196 With his reference to 'platform' (*tribunalia*), Erasmus likely has in mind the Roman *tribunal* ('A raised semicircular or square platform, on which the seats of magistrates were placed, a judgment-seat, tribunal' L&S) for Quintilian's *subsellium* ('bench, or seat' L&S). See Quintilian 11.3.133: 'To cross over to the seats of our opponents [*Transire in diversa subsellia*] borders on impudence, and Cassius Severus showed a neat turn of wit when he demanded that a barrier might be erected between himself and an opponent who behaved in this fashion.'
197 Quintilian 11.2.123

come from the Hebrews, for thus Jeremiah in chapter 31: 'After you converted me I did penitence and, after you showed me, I struck my thigh.'[198] Now they more fittingly strike the pulpit instead of their thigh, for indeed striking the forehead was once recommended, according to Cicero, though Quintilian impugns it.[199]

Sometimes the preacher turns to the right or left in order to be heard all the better by everyone and to catch everyone's attention, but doing this constantly is unseemly, for some, in their affectation of rhetorical gestures, take on the appearance of reapers. Swaying of the body, putting the weight now on the right foot and now on the left, is noticed also by the people: it is, as someone says, as though they were preaching from a skiff.[200] Likewise, excessive straightening or bending of the entire body is unseemly,[201] for we have no need to raise ourselves aloft immediately if we are saying something lofty or to arrange ourselves at once with body bent if we are talking about something that is done in that position. Nevertheless, some err in both regards, since both are theatrical. It is recorded that a mime, when he recited in a poem the phrase 'That great Agamemnon,'[202] raised his body as high as he could on the tips of his toes. His coach, who was present in the theatre, shouted back, 'You're making him tall, not great.' When the audience demanded that he add a more suitable gesture, he represented Agamemnon deep in thought. But this too is theatrical, nor does it become the preacher to make himself look like someone deep in thought when he is discussing someone deep in thought. But I myself have seen some who bent their body like a toady when flattering a king, raised their body when speaking against bishops whom they wished to appear to scorn. I have heard of someone who, when he related how the Lord walked when burdened by the cross,[203] bowed his body like someone toting a heavy load, doing his utmost with the sound of his feet as well to imitate a man walking. The same man, in my hearing, after giving a dramatic account of the horrifying noise made by the

* * * * *

198 Jer 31:19

199 Quintilian 11.3.123: 'With regard to the forehead I must beg leave to differ from him [Cicero]: for it is a purely theatrical trick even to clap the hands or beat the breast.'

200 See Quintilian 11.3.128.

201 See Quintilian 11.3.120.

202 See Macrobius *Saturnalia* 2.7.12–14 as the source for the phrase 'the great Agamemnon' and the following anecdote; Macrobius *The Saturnalia* trans Percival Vaughan Davies (New York and London 1969) 183.

203 See Matt 27:31–3; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:25–7.

whole crowd when they shouted with one voice, 'Crucify, crucify!'[204] commanded the whole congregation to call out as loudly as they could, 'Crucify, crucify!' Something amusing happened to a certain ἱεροπρεπής [clerical gentleman].[205] He had a large, tall frame himself and was speaking from a rather low pulpit from which others usually speak seated; and when he was trying to sound forceful and was waving his arms about with his body stretched to its full height, the upper part of his body, being heavier, tilted forward so that he tumbled into the nearby crowd, revealing to the eyes of women and of men things that it is more modest to conceal.

Also foolish and unseemly are the actions that some affect in order to stir the emotions. When they are going to speak about scorning life and about human pride, they bring onto the pulpit under their robe two skulls taken from a cemetery, then produce them when their sermon has reached its emotional climax and smash them together with such a great crack that the teeth are shaken out and scatter among the congregation, shouting, 'What do you think you are? This is what you are, you miserable people!' This certainly stirs the emotions of simple folk. But anything that stirs the emotions by whatever the means does not automatically befit a preacher. More tolerable is the action of someone who was dramatizing Christ's sufferings in order to rouse greater commiseration and suddenly produced a crucifix, saying, 'Behold this unmerited treatment of Christ.' This and other such things, however, do not suit the serious preacher.[206] Otherwise one would have to approve it if someone, after discoursing at length about what a foul beast the devil is, to whose dominion sinners consign themselves, would suddenly produce a man disguised as the sort of devil that runs about in

* * * * *

204 See Matt 27:31–3; Mark 15:13–24; Luke 23:20–3; John 19:14–15.

205 Here Erasmus uses the relatively rare Greek word ἱεροπρεπής to enhance the comedy. LSJ acknowledges this word only as an adjective meaning 'beseeming a sacred place, person, or matter.' Chomarat views it as 'Auguste, sacré (Lucian. Xen. Plat.); supérieur d'ordre religieux ou prélat? souligne le comique de l'épisode'; ASD V-5 43 735n.

206 'Do not suit' (*non conveniunt*); the idea of what is 'befitting,' 'decorous,' 'appropriate,' 'becoming' runs throughout Erasmus' instruction for preachers. These examples seek to educate the preacher in what a preacher may and may not do when handling (ie delivery) the word of God. For the idea of 'the fitting' (*decus*) in antiquity, see Quintilian 11.3.177, who gives this guideline: '"The main secret of artistic success is that whatever we do should become us well" . . .' Quintilian acknowledges how difficult it is to give detailed guidelines on what is becoming; see Quintilian 11.3.177–84.

popular entertainments. The man who sought to rouse the jurors' mercy by carrying into court in his arms the ward whose case he was pleading is an object of mockery, but he also carried his young client back again, an embarrassed retreat that did not pass without public laughter.[207]

There is some importance to be attached to clothing, concerning which one can give the general instruction that it should be worthy of a good and serious preacher, but what is proper varies in accordance with place, time, persons, and custom.[208] I hear that some are now preaching before the congregation in clothing of wolf skins as a corrective to the authoritarianism of others, but that only changes the fault rather than correcting it. The Italians dress more appropriately than the Germans. Some who have professed a religious life are unwilling for the garb of their order to be covered, as though nothing were more sacred, but even they cover it during the Eucharist. But if a deacon rightly assumes a sacred vestment when he is going to read the Gospel, how much more appropriate it is for a priest who is going to comment on the Gospel, especially since commentary on the Gospel was once a part of the mass. Nor did a bishop teach the people in any other vestment than that in which he carried out the sacred mysteries. Nor is it anything new to employ sacred vestments in sacred functions; that custom flowed into the church from Moses himself,[209] and it has trickled down from the latter's innovation all the way to us. Furthermore, just as modest and appropriate clothing commends the person who is preaching, so the unseemly tossing, lowering, raising, whirling of clothing is out of place. I myself have seen in Rome a preacher of the first rank who,[210] as soon as he had finished part of his sermon, bent both hands towards his back and whirled his garment from the rear part of his body to both sides; though nothing could be more repugnant than this gesture, yet I think he did it unaware. I was

* * * * *

207 Erasmus freely adapts an example given by Quintilian 6.1.37–9. In Erasmus' adaptation here the lawyer, to arouse pity, carried his ward (*pupillus*) into court, and when the strategy backfired, he had to carry him back in a pusillanimous retreat (*frigide* = 'not having the intended effect').

208 See Quintilian 11.3.137–49, where he notes that 'there is no special garb peculiar to the orator . . .' though he writes extensively about the toga. In Erasmus' day, the preacher's garb was various.

209 See Exodus 28. See book 1 CWE 67 301–20 where Erasmus gives the spiritual understanding of the high priest's garments.

210 Erasmus in general is critical of the Italian preachers, as noted earlier; see the dialogue between Nosoponus and Bulephorus about the Good Friday sermon held before Pope Julius II in the Sistine Chapel, *Ciceronianus* CWE 28 384–6. See especially the comment on this in O'Malley *Praise and Blame* 29–31.

surprised that he had no friend to warn him, for I spoke with him only once or twice; we had not yet become intimate.

I shall finish my discussion of delivery by adding that one must consider before all else what suits each person.[211] For nature has bestowed upon some a peculiar grace such that whatever they do is seemly, as is said about good men in the proverb.[212] This cannot be imparted by theory or explained in words. In these people even vices that would be quite disgusting in others are fitting and delightful, while some, on the other hand, have been endowed with a mysterious blight that makes even their virtues unattractive.[213] Therefore, a preacher should know himself and should pay attention not just to the art of rhetoric but also to his own nature. Experts approve a moderate pause at the start of speaking,[214] since this arouses the audience's expectation; but some puff out their cheeks three times[215] during this silence, and that is unseemly. A thoughtful appearance is appropriate.

I return now to what I put off for a little, and I shall show briefly the ways in which an address can be powerful, pleasant, and copious.[216] Commonplaces contribute to power and an abundant style alike.[217] I am using the term commonplaces here to mean the frequently occurring sentiments that, when applied through amplification either for praise or for blame, assist in convincing people of our chosen point. They occur more frequently, however, in the demonstrative type. For example, if you should be praising some prince for his clemency, a commonplace will be used to amplify what an outstanding virtue clemency is and how detestable cruelty is. On the other hand, if you were praising a bishop for his modesty, you should stress what a great virtue modesty is and how many good things it produces in a man. Likewise, if you should be urging someone's appointment to the

* * * * *

211 'What suits each person' (*quid quem deceat*); again Erasmus declares the principle of decorum as guiding what is appropriate in delivery. See n206 above.

212 See *Adagia* II ix 60 *Omnia bonos viros decent* 'Everything comes well from a good man.'

213 See Quintilian 11.3.178.

214 Quintilian 11.3.157–8

215 Erasmus' word is 'three times' (*ter*); perhaps he is referring to some symbolic sacred gesture practised by certain preachers. See OLD 2121 *ter*: '1. On three occasions, three times (often w. ref. to ritually repeated acts).'

216 'Powerful, pleasant, and copious' (*vehemens, iucunda et copiosa*): these qualities of a sermon are just some of the many that characterize the eloquent sermon or oration; see Quintilian 12.10.69–71; Cicero *Orator* 5.19.

217 Erasmus has given extensive instruction on 'commonplaces' (*loci communes*) in book 2 614–717. See also *De copia* CWE 24 605–6, 636–48. Erasmus notes here their particular usefulness in epideictic (demonstrative) oratory, ie the art of praise and blame. See also Quintilian 2.4.22.

office of bishop because he is chaste, because he scorns money, because he is favourably disposed towards teaching, you will have to amplify what a great virtue chastity is, what great infamy immodesty wins for a priest, what great corruption results from the love of money, then what a sublime office it is to instruct the people towards piety,[218] how pleasing to God. If you should be deterring someone from revenge, the commonplace will be that no one is harmed except by himself. Likewise, in rebuking and consoling:[219] if you should be rebuking someone for indulging in malicious gossip, you will have to stress what a great crime it is to harm a neighbour's reputation with the venom of your tongue,[220] which is a kind of murder; if you should be consoling a sick person,[221] you will have to enlarge on the idea of the brevity of this life, its uncertainty, its vulnerability to countless troubles, in brief, that it is not life if compared to the life to which death transports the devout; you will have to stress the importance of faith, which alone enables us to fear neither death nor the kingdom of hell.

And it will be possible for these commonplaces to be drawn first of all from all the kinds and parts of virtues and of vices. By 'parts' I mean the species into which the genus 'virtue' is divided;[222] for instance, justice is a genus that has various subdivisions. Sometimes a genus supports a genus and a species a species. An example of the former will be, 'In order to undertake dangers on behalf of the state, one frequently needs wisdom, which teaches what is truly to be feared and what is not; and in order to protect justice steadfastly against the mighty, one frequently needs fortitude,' of the latter, 'A frugal life nourishes modesty, luxury corrupts it.' Therefore, someone who is commending chastity will be helped by amplifying the praise of frugality and hatred of luxury.[223] It is a constant that contraries are used to illuminate each other.[224]

* * * * *

218 In the phrase 'to instruct the people towards piety' (*ad pietatem erudire populum*), Erasmus gives the essence of the preacher's duty.

219 Cf 2 Tim 3:16: 'All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness'; 2 Tim 4:2; and Rom 15:4: 'For whatever things were written, were written for our learning: that through patience and the consolation [*consolatio*] of the scriptures, we might have hope.'

220 See eg *Lingua* CWE 29 262–412, especially 269–85; see 775, 780, 857 below.

221 See *De praeparatione* CWE 70 393–450, which offers these and many more arguments for the sick and dying to deal with 'the thought of their own death.'

222 See book 2 544.

223 I have departed here from Chomarat's punctuation, which makes the words 'Therefore someone ... hatred of luxury' part of Erasmus' second example rather than his instruction. (Translator's note)

224 See book 2 669–70.

Next one may draw arguments from aphorisms that are derived from these ideas and reinforce them, such as, 'No one is harmed except by himself,' 'Someone who causes an injury is harmed more grievously than the one who suffers it,' 'Someone who ignores an injury suffered is stronger than the one who inflicts it,' 'One who would rather suffer a loss than pursue it in the courts or in war is much better off,' 'Profit gained by deceit is loss, not profit,' 'No victory is more splendid than when someone controls his emotions,' 'Overcoming anger is more splendid than taking a city,' 'There is no surer proof of a lofty mind than ignoring an injury,' 'Someone who repays evil with evil becomes evil himself from his hatred of evil and deserving of hatred,' 'Whoever disregards an enemy is a strong and wise man,' 'Whoever repays kindness for an injury is a man of the gospel,' 'Whoever plots vengeance is very close to murder,' 'No service turns God more quickly towards forgiving us our trespasses than when we forgive a neighbour to please him,' 'Trading wrong for wrong never ends,' 'Animosity is best ended by patience,' 'Anger is madness, different only in being shorter,'[225] 'It is foolish to be able to put up with being splashed or kicked by a horse but to endure nothing from a foolish and wicked man,' 'Nobody trusts an inebriate, but since the drunkenness of anger is much more dangerous than that of wine, anyone who trusts himself when angry is behaving foolishly,' 'Sleep is helpful to the drunkard, rest and delay are a help in anger,'[226] 'What anger prompts soon ends in penitence; reason's counsel always finds favour,' 'The memory of kindnesses ought to be undying, that of wrongs very brief.'[227] These and countless others that can be discovered in authors or invented to suit the case are appropriate for one who is commending penitence and discouraging vengeance. Likewise, 'It is godlike to help a mortal,'[228] 'Someone who has given a kindness to a worthy person has received one in giving,'[229] 'Whoever gives quickly and eagerly gives twice,'[230] 'It is generosity's part sometimes to forego a kindness as well,'

* * * * *

225 Cf Horace *Epistles* 1.2.62: 'Anger is short-lived madness'; and see Seneca *Epistulae morales* 83.19.

226 Cf Seneca *De ira* 2.29.1: 'The best corrective of anger lies in delay.' See *Adagia* II i 1 *Festina lente* 'Make haste slowly.'

227 See *Adagia* II i 94 *Ne malorum memineris* 'Remember no wrongs.'

228 Cf Pliny *Naturalis historia* 2.5.18: 'For mortal to aid mortal – this is god . . .'

229 Publilius Syrus *Sententiae* 68: 'The giver of a gift deserved gets benefit by giving.' Erasmus published the *Sententiae* of Publilius (whom he calls Publius) at London in 1514. He realized that many of the *sententiae* were later accessions and not of Publilius himself. See *Lingua* CWE 29 494 n76.

230 Cf *Adagia* I viii 91 *Bis dat qui cito dat* 'He that gives quickly gives twice.'

'Someone who gives to someone who will make wrongful use of it gives not a benefit but harm,'[231] 'Nothing is deposited more safely than what is bestowed upon good men,' 'Do not hesitate to sow,'[232] 'Someone who gives in order to receive more in return is not a benefactor but a businessman,' 'Nothing is more wasted than what is bestowed upon an ingrate, but whoever is generous towards his neighbour in love of Christ is not cheated of grace,' 'Whoever pities the poor makes a loan to God,'[233] 'No one is born for himself,'[234] 'Whoever keeps for himself alone whatever he has is unworthy of having it.' All these will assist someone who is urging towards kindness.

A third kind[235] is the one taken from everyday life, that is, from things that are commonly said or happen, especially remarkable ones. For some things are both proverbial and factual; for example, 'Stepmothers dislike their stepchildren,' 'Children are corrupted by their mothers' indulgence,' 'Slaves grumble in secret against their masters,' and 'Everyone has as many enemies as he has slaves,'[236] 'From the wicked are born the wicked,' 'From a bad crow, a bad egg,'[237] 'Ill gained, ill wasted,'[238] 'Things that grow up suddenly are not long lasting,'[239] 'Quickly enough if well enough,'[240] 'Public office reveals the man.'[241] Some things are said so that they may be done or

* * * * *

231 Cf Publilius Syrus *Sententiae* 578.

232 *Adagia* I ii 41 *Serere ne dubites* 'Do not hesitate to plant.'

233 Prov 19:17: 'One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the Lord, And He will repay him for his good deed.'

234 Chomarat (ASD V-5 48 847–8n) suggests Plato *Letter IX: To Archytas of Tarentum* (IX 358A) as the source of this saying: 'You must, however, consider this fact too, that each of us is born not for himself alone'; Plato *The Collected Dialogues* (Princeton 1985) 1606. The quotation is repeated by Cicero in *De officiis* 1.7.22: 'But since, as Plato has admirably expressed it, we are not born for ourselves alone [*non nobis solum nati sumus*], but our country claims a share of our being, and our friends a share . . .'

235 'A third kind'; ie commonplaces (*loci communes*).

236 *Adagia* II iii 31 *Quot servos habemus, totidem habemus hostes* 'We have as many enemies as we have slaves.'

237 See *Adagia* I ix 25 *Mali corvi malum ovum* 'An ill crow lays an ill egg.'

238 Cf *Adagia* I vii 82 *Male parta male dilabuntur* 'Ill gotten ill spent.'

239 Cf *Adagia* II i 1 *Festina lente* 'Make haste slowly.' This, of course, was the motto of Caesar Augustus; see Suetonius *Divus Augustus* 2.25: σπεῦδε βραδέως. This is also a lesson of the parable about the sower; see Matthew 13 and Mark 4.

240 See Jerome Ep 66.9 NPNF 2nd series 6 138, where he attributes this maxim to Cato: 'It is moreover a shrewd maxim, this of Cato, "Fast enough if well enough."'

241 Cf *Adagia* I x 76 *Magistratus virum indicat* ''Tis the place that shows the man.'

avoided: 'Nothing to excess,'[242] 'Disaster is at hand for the man who puts up a bond,'[243] 'Know yourself,'[244] 'The chief solace of old age is to have lived well in youth,'[245] 'The best provision for old age is learning,'[246] 'Whoever is not wise for himself is wise in vain,'[247] 'Whoever has no nobility except his ancestral portraits is undistinguished,'[248] 'Whoever has no virtue is disgracefully poor,'[249] 'Eyes see more than an eye,'[250] etc. Let the following be examples of things that happen exceptionally and to few:[251] exceptional longevity; vigorous and flourishing old age; elderly youth; marvellous fertility; rare felicity; exceptional physical strength; exceptional memory or forgetfulness; rare eloquence; exceptional wealth or poverty; varied and outstanding experience of either fortune; sudden change of fortune; outstanding beauty; exceptional ugliness; a distinguished mind in an ugly body; an ugly mind in an attractive body; exceptional polygamy; exceptional πολυγλωττία [knowledge of many languages];[252] a sad outcome to great prosperity; that life contains more aloe than honey;[253] sudden death; voluntary death; premature death. There is nothing among these that cannot be accommodated to the power and eloquence of a speech. For example, if someone, in consoling an old man or an invalid, is urging him to scorn this life, he will take his commonplace from premature or sudden death: 'How many infants die within the recesses of their mother's womb, how many in birth itself, how many in the cradle! Then how many adults die by a sudden

* * * * *

242 'Nothing to excess' (*Ne quid nimis*; Greek Μηδὲν ἄγαν); *Adagia* I vi 96. The phrase occurs often in ancient writings. See eg Terence *Andria* 61.

243 *Adagia* I vi 97 *Sponde, noxa praesto est* 'Stand surety, and ruin is at hand.'

244 This and the two previous maxims are the famous three inscribed at the temple of Apollo at Delphi. See Eliza G. Wilkins *The Delphic Maxims in Literature* (Chicago 1929) 1. (Translator's note) See *Adagia* I vi 95 *Nosce teipsum* 'Know thyself.'

245 Cf Cicero *Cato minor de senectute* 3.9.

246 *De copia* CWE 24 637

247 See *Adagia* I vi 20.

248 Cf Sallust *Jugurtha* 85.10 and 14; and Juvenal *Satires* 8.1–86.

249 Cf *Adagia* I v 22 *Paupertas sapientiam sortita est* 'Poverty has drawn wisdom as her lot.'

250 Cf Apuleius *Florida* 2: 'One man that has eyes is better by far as a witness than ten that have ears'; *Apologia and Florida* trans H.E. Butler (Oxford 1909) 160; see *Adagia* II vi 54 *Pluris est oculatus testis quam auriti decem* 'One eye-witness is worth more than ten ear-witnesses.'

251 See *De copia* CWE 24 637 (some of these are given).

252 Chomarat notes that πολυγλωττία ('knowledge of many languages') does not appear in dictionaries, but it occurs – once – in Eustathius' commentary on the *Iliad*. (Translator's note) See ASD IV-5 49 868n.

253 See Juvenal *Satires* 6.181.

death, and how few manage to reach the threshold of old age!'[254] From exceptional longevity he will take 'Now, though a longevity as great as Methusaleh's should be your lot,[255] what is there in this life to make one wish to prolong it, since there have been many who have grown weary of their toils and have chosen death?' or 'What is a life of a hundred years in comparison to eternity but a moment of time?' Let this stand as a model, which the reader may imitate in making judgments in other cases.

Sentiments of this sort, handled through amplification, assist our purpose and enrich a speech with no idle bonus.

The rhetoricians of antiquity have explained abundantly the methods of which amplification consists,[256] and this subject does not require any effort by us except perhaps to clarify a few things with a cruder Minerva,[257] as they say. Not the least part of eloquence lies in augmenting and diminishing, especially for the preacher, who generally must speak before an untrained crowd inclined to yawn. The only difference is that a legal advocate uses amplification to try to make something appear greater than it is, trivialization to make it appear smaller. Either one is a form of deceit and imposture. For the preacher it is enough for something to seem as great as it is, greater or lesser than it seems to many.[258] For the common man judges foolishly about things; he chooses the worst as the best, embracing the slightest virtues as the greatest and neglecting the highest and most genuine as the least. For who is there that does not value physical qualities more than mental ones, temporary more than eternal ones? Moreover, hatred, resentment and anger make another's troubles seem more serious to us than they really are. On the other hand, love often makes things that are bad seem good to us and makes things that are good seem greater than

* * * * *

254 See *De praeparatione* CWE 70 406–50 and passim for consoling others facing death.

255 Gen 5:21–7; Methusaleh lived 969 years.

256 See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 2.30.47–50 ('Amplification is the principle of using Commonplaces to stir the hearers'); Cicero *Partitiones oratoriae* 15.52–17.58 and *De oratore* 3.26.104–3.27.105 ('But the highest distinction of eloquence consists in amplification by means of ornament . . .'); Quintilian 8.4.1–29; and Erasmus *De copia* CWE 24 592–5, which relies on Quintilian.

257 *Adagia* I i 37, I i 38. As Chomarat notes, the phrase is Erasmus' fusion of *crassa Minerva* and *crassiore Musa*, meaning 'in a more simplified manner'; see ASD IV-5 49 884n. (Translator's note)

258 Erasmus' comment demonstrates this technique in book 1 CWE 67 252, 277, 305–6 and passim where he discourses at length on the dignity of the office of the preacher.

they really are. This happens more within ourselves, for how few could you find that do not flatter themselves by minimizing their own faults, unjustly exalting their virtues? Moreover, every amplification and diminution is derived either from situations or from words;[259] from situations are derived emotions, from words the methods that we will now expound.

The first method of magnifying or diminishing consists in changing the word for something: we add a more shocking one in magnifying, a milder one in diminishing.[260] We have an example of the former if we say that someone who has been killed has been slaughtered; if we should call someone a brigand instead of a rascal, a whore instead of a flirt, a sacker of churches instead of a thief; if we should call someone who lives too splendidly a drunkard, an irascible person a madman, a habitual joker a buffoon, a violent person a butcher, a slanderer a poisoner, a wicked man an utter villain, etc, for it is very common for someone who is somewhat annoying to be said to slay or to murder, for someone who has silenced speech to be accused of strangling, for someone who has used torture to be said to have killed. In addition, we say that those who live too delicately are half men, unmanned, and effeminate. We have an example of this kind when Saul, instead of calling Jonathan's mother an adulteress, calls her a ravisher of men,[261] signifying that Jonathan is not his legitimate son but another man's. We have an example of minimizing when one who has struck somebody is said to have touched him, one who has wounded somebody is said to have hurt him,[262] someone who is mentally ill to be at odds with himself, in sum whenever we use the name of a kindred virtue to reduce a fault, such as when we call a cruel man somewhat too severe, a rash man too innocent, a flatterer friendly and affable, a city corrupted by licence 'free.' This type has an affinity with the locus that depends on definition, for the word for something is being changed, yet not falsely, for example, if someone should call every war that Christians wage with Christians a civil war on the grounds that they are all brothers and citizens among themselves,[263] or if someone should call every sexual wrong that a Christian man commits with a Christian woman incest on the grounds that everyone is dedicated to Christ,[264] or if someone should call every transaction that contains some element of

* * * * *

259 See Quintilian 8.3.89–90.
260 Quintilian 8.4.1–3
261 1 Sam 20:30
262 Quintilian 8.4.1–3
263 This is a major theme of *Querela pacis*; see CWE 27 289–322, especially 305, 310 (where Erasmus takes the idea from Plato *Republic* 5.470C–D).
264 On 'incest,' see 627 and n836.

deceit theft or embezzlement or sacrilege, likewise if someone should call any heretical error blasphemy because it opposes Christ, who is the highest truth,[265] or if someone should, with Paul, call greed idolatry.[266]

And this becomes more powerful and strikes the mind more sharply if, by way of correction, stronger words are used in comparison with those they are replacing.[267] Cicero offers an example in *In Verrem*: 'For we are bringing into your court not a thief but a plunderer, not an adulterer but a ravisher of chastity, not a temple robber but an enemy of sacred observances and beliefs, not an assassin but a most cruel butcher of citizens and allies.'[268]

Similar to these are the cases where, in an attempt to amplify the weight of evidence, someone exaggerates as follows: 'These are not words used carelessly in ordinary speech but set down in writing, and not just any writing but one approved by the whole world's consent; and they belong not just to any man but to an ecclesiastical teacher, and not just any theologian but an apostle, and not just any apostle but Paul, the most excellent of all, or rather not Paul but the Holy Spirit speaking to us through the mouth of Paul.'[269] Likewise, if someone were to exaggerate a charge of slander thus: 'You stripped him not of his money but of his reputation,[270] which is dearer even than all wealth, and you betrayed not an enemy but a brother and friend who treated you well; or rather you did not betray but killed him' (for a man's reputation is his life), and 'You did not kill him with a sword but with the poison of your tongue' (so that it is now poisoning rather than simple murder), 'and you did not kill one man but all in whom you extinguished brotherly love with your tongue's poison.' Finally, 'You did not kill a man, but you killed Christ himself in his members,[271] at least in so far as this is in your power.'

Hyperbole,[272] which says more than the facts warrant, is not vastly different from this type nor is it automatically a falsehood, since sacred

* * * * *

265 John 14:6; 1 John 5.6
266 Col 3:5; see *Lingua* CWE 29 337.
267 See Quintilian 8.4.2; Cicero *De oratore* 3.53.203.
268 *In Verrem* II 1.3.9; cited by Quintilian 8.4.2; see *De copia* CWE 24 594. See 776 below.
269 The quotation marks around 'These are not words ... through the mouth of Paul' are my own addition; they are clearly an illustrative example of amplification, not part of Erasmus' exposition. (Translator's note)
270 *Lingua* CWE 29 338, 341–2 and passim.
271 1 Cor 6:15 and 19, 12:12–27; Rom 12:4–5; Eph 3:6, 4:25, 5:30; Col 3:5
272 See Quintilian 8.4.29 and 6.3.67; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.33.44; *De copia* CWE 24 344.

teachers so often reveal hyperbole in the canonical books.[273] For no one is deceived here; rather everyone understands that something incredible has been said for the sake of exaggerating or minimizing something. For example, if someone were to say about a noisy ranter, 'He could break doors and marbles with his garrulity,' the listener understands only a remarkably immoderate talkativeness;[274] or if someone were to say of a man uncommonly pleased with himself that 'he thinks he touches heaven with his finger,'[275] the listener imagines mentally only the man's almost unspeakable arrogance. Equally, when the Psalm says that 'waves ascended as high as the heavens and descended all the way to the abyss'[276] (that is, to hell), we only understand a terrible storm. Likewise, when Paul writes to the Philippians that he 'considered everything as dung to win profit for Christ,'[277] we take it to mean only extreme contempt for human affairs. But an opportunity to say more about this will occur in what follows.

There is another kind of augmentation through increment,[278] when one exaggerates lesser things and reaches the highest through one or more steps; for the final element grows powerfully if the lower ones also seem exceedingly great. There is a clear example at hand from Cicero in *In Verrum*: 'It is an outrage to bind a Roman citizen, a crime to beat him, murder to kill him. What shall I call crucifying him?'[279] He has used two steps to augment murder, and he has left the final stage to the listener's imagination, since no word more dreadful than that could be found.

There is a second method of augmentation,[280] when something more outstanding is added to the highest element, for example, in Virgil: 'Than

* * * * *

273 Eg Luke 19:40: 'To whom he said: I say to you that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.' Erasmus gives fuller treatment to hyperbole below; see 828–34.

274 For 'He could ... talkativeness,' see *De copia* CWE 24 344 n15; for Erasmus' disdain of talkativeness, see *Lingua* CWE 29 269–85 and passim. See also *Adagia* IV iii 77 *Columnas rumpere*.

275 *Adagia* IV iii 67 *Coelum digito attingere*. Cf Wisd of Sol 18:16: *et usque ad caelum attingebat stans in terra*.

276 Ps 106:25–6 (Vulg); Ps 107:25–6 (RSV)

277 Phil 3:8. See *Annotationes in Philippenses* 3.8; Reeve and Screech (2) 628.

278 For 'increment' (*incrementum*), see Quintilian 8.4.3: 'There are four principal methods of amplification: augmentation, comparison, reasoning, and accumulation. Of these, augmentation [*incrementum*] is most impressive when it lends grandeur even to comparative insignificance.' See *De copia* CWE 24 592.

279 *In Verrem* II 5.66.170; cited by Quintilian 8.4.4; see also *De copia* CWE 24 592.

280 Erasmus likes to vary his technical vocabulary, but this can lead to confusion. By 'increment' here he means what elsewhere he calls 'augmentation' (*incrementum*), but 'increment' in English does not have the desired meaning.

whom no other / Was more fair, except the body of Laurentine Turnus.'[281] The highest element was 'Than whom no other was more fair'; beyond the highest element is 'except the body of Laurentine Turnus.' Similar would be 'Sallust, easily the most eloquent of all, with the exception of Cicero alone,' 'Diomedes, far the bravest of all the Greeks, always excepting Achilles,' 'Among men there was nothing more holy than John the Baptist, always excepting Christ.'[282]

A third method is when one proceeds by steps not to what is more than the greatest but only to that than which nothing greater can be said, for example, 'You have killed your mother. What more can I say? You have killed your mother.'[283]

The fourth method of augmentation is when something greater than what has preceded is always being added in an unbroken series in the context and course of the speech, and the highest element is reached not through a laborious effort but by the relentlessness of the attack. For example, Cicero on Antony's vomiting: 'But in an assembly of the Roman people, conducting public business, as Master of the Horse.'[284] The individual elements contain augmentation: it was disgraceful in itself to vomit, even not in an assembly, even in an assembly that was not of the people, even not of the Roman people, even if he were conducting no business, even if not public business, even if he were not doing it as Master of the Horse.[285] It would not be at all difficult to create similar examples following this model. For example, 'He was not ashamed to roll the dice with layabouts in a public tavern, though a priest, a pastor, a theologian, a monk,' 'He did not blush to tell an egregious lie, in a sacred address, in a packed church, though an old man, a herald of the gospel, a professor of theology, venerable for his white pallium.'

There is another sort of amplification that depends on comparison and seeks to amplify by comparison with lesser elements;[286] if these are universally regarded as important, whatever we are seeking to amplify must appear very important. This is most often done through supposition,[287] which

* * * * *

281 Virgil *Aeneid* 7.649–50; cited by Quintilian 8.4.6.

282 Cf Matt 11:11.

283 Quintilian 8.4.7: Erasmus changes 'You have slain (*cecidisti*) your mother' to 'You have killed (*occidisti*) your mother.'

284 Cicero *Philippics* 2.25.63, cited by Quintilian 8.4.8; see *De copia* CWE 24 592–3.

285 By Cicero's day the Master of the Horse (*magister equitum*) was the dictator's representative at Rome and in battle. Mark Antony served as Caesar's *magister equitum* from 48(?)–47 BC. See Plutarch *Antonius* 8.2–3.

286 Quintilian 8.4.9

287 For 'supposition,' see 586, 592–3, 662–5, 702–4 above.

was discussed above, sometimes with one step, sometimes with several. And it doesn't matter that we discussed supposition and comparison among the loci of arguments, for nothing prevents amplification or embellishment from being taken from the same loci from which the proof is taken, and it is no novelty for the same things to be adapted to different uses. For example, arguments are drawn from all circumstances, both of thing and of person,[288] but emotions or exaggerations are also taken from them, as is apparent in the demonstrative type. For instance, when we praise modesty in a young man, we are not striving to convince people that he was modest but to make that virtue appear greater in the flower of youth. Sometimes genus and species and difference and property and similars and examples and causes and definition and outcomes and consequents and incompatibles and contraries are applied for the same purpose. For example, in Isaiah, 'An ox knows his owner and an ass the manger of his master; but Israel does not know me,'[289] the example of the ox and the ass is not applied to prove that the Hebrews do not acknowledge their God but for the amplification of that nation's impiety and obtuseness. This itself could be adapted to a proof, thus: 'If an ox and an ass recognize the masters by whom they are nourished and whom they serve, how much more appropriate it is for man to recognize God his creator and nourisher and to serve him with body and mind alike.' On the other hand, when Paul says, 'No one on military service is involved in secular business,'[290] he uses a similar case to prove that it is not fitting for those who soldier for the gospel to be compelled to worry about their provisioning.[291] He would have adapted it to amplification if he had made his proposition this way: 'Those who soldier for a human leader are not worried about their provisioning but expect their rations from their commander and strive only to give him faithful and energetic service; how much more disgraceful it is that some who have professed soldiering for Christ in the gospel lack confidence in such a commander and devote their energies to amassing wealth.' Of the same sort is what Quintilian reports from Cicero about Antony's vomiting: 'If this had happened to you over dinner and in those monstrous cups of yours, who would not think it a disgrace? But in an assembly of the Roman people,'[292] etc. Here the

* * * * *

288 For Erasmus' treatment of this, see book 2 499, 518, 556 n462, 587, 591, 595–99, 614 above; cf Chomarat ASD V-5 370–88.
289 Isa 1:3
290 2 Tim 2:4
291 Cf 1 Tim 5:17–18.
292 Quintilian 8.4.8

amplification has been sought from something lesser, as also in what he said against Catiline: 'By Hercules, if my slaves feared me in the same way that all your fellow citizens fear you, I would think that I had to abandon my own house.'[293] This too has been taken from something lesser: a few slaves are compared to all the citizens, and men who are not free to those who are, and a master to Catiline, who was not the master of his fellow citizens, and a house is compared to a state. Thus far the language has increased by only a single step.

This will stand as an example for several: 'If some man granted you for free an annual income of a thousand drachmas, would you not love him sincerely and strive with all your might to repay the favour? If some stranger had ransomed you with his own money from wretched slavery among barbarians or had freed you from a foul dungeon, would you not love that man and revere him throughout your life? If someone had used his own strength to save you from certain death in a battle or in a shipwreck, would you not revere that man like a god and confess that you could never repay him a like favour? What sort of ingratitude is it, then, towards Christ – who is both God and man, who made you the noblest creature after the angels, to whom you owe all that you have, who in addition to the nourishment of your body freely gave you justice, freely shared the gifts of his Spirit, who fought for you with Satan, who, when you were taken captive, ransomed you not with money but with his own blood, who on top of all this invites you to share his heavenly kingdom – to neglect him in this way, to spurn him, to offend him every day with your crimes and to return such effrontery for such kindness?' Here the language has increased from lesser elements by several stages.

Sometimes equals are also compared, but then one has to use words to ensure that what we are exaggerating seems to be greater than it appears at first glance. A woman administering an abortion for a fee and someone else giving a drug to induce an abortion seem to be equals, and yet Cicero makes this latter more dreadful,[294] as follows: 'How much greater is the punishment that Oppianicus deserves for the same wrong, inasmuch as when she attacked her own body, she tormented herself, but he did the same thing by inflicting terrible pain upon the body of another.' What the woman did and what Oppianicus did would seem equal had Cicero not made them unequal with his words.

* * * * *

293 Cicero *In Catilinam* 1:17; quoted by Quintilian 8.4.10 and by Erasmus *De copia* CWE 24 593.

294 Cicero *Pro Cluentio* 11.32; quoted by Quintilian 8.4.11.

Moreover, inequality is taken from all the loci and circumstances.[295] Here it will often happen that the speaker turns popular opinion to his advantage; for who does not think it a disgraceful crime to steal another's money, and who is so easy-going as to put up with being called a thief? But slander is either not considered a crime or is considered a minor lapse;[296] the preacher, therefore, will make use of popular opinion in this case and, inverting the order, will declare that it is far more criminal to slander another's reputation than to take another's money by theft. He will do this with a variety of circumstances and arguments. First, he will use the locus of definition to show both that slander is theft and that a slanderer is a thief or a robber: each takes something that belongs to someone else. Next he will add that slander is worse than any kind of theft, first with the argument that a good reputation is better than money in many respects, then because the loss of money can easily be recovered, that of reputation cannot. In fact, it is within the thief's power to return what he has stolen, but it is not within the slanderer's power to restore the reputation that he has stolen. In addition, someone who steals clothing or money harms only one man, but a slanderer taints the mind of everyone reached by the evil rumour that he has spread. Likewise, one can take precautions against a thief, none against a slanderer. Furthermore, crimes that are committed secretly and by deceit are punished more fiercely under the law: for instance, killing by poison is more grievous than by the sword, and killing by ambush is more grievous than by open force. The augmentation will be drawn from instrument or method: a thief commits his crime with his hand, a slanderer with his tongue – a woman's weapon.

In addition, everyone agrees that poisoning is a foul crime, but those who stain the minds of princes with corrupt counsels poison more foully, inasmuch as they are doing the same thing as those who use poison to taint a spring from which everyone draws water. Moreover, it is more grievous to taint the mind than the body.

It is commonplace and not reckoned a crime to sell tainted wine as pure, though there are many dreadful crimes in this single act: theft, for it makes no difference whether you take another's money with your hand or by deceit, except that it is more disgraceful to deceive someone who trusts you; poisoning, inasmuch as wine of that sort casts many people into serious ailments, the sickly and the aged, moreover, even into death, whence it is also the cruelest kind of murder by far, either because it kills many or because it often carries off those to whom honour and devotion is owed.

* * * * *

295 For Erasmus' discussion of loci and circumstances, see passim above.

296 See these variations and more of these arguments in *Lingua* CWE 29 341–2.

Sometimes this comparison is made between things that appear to be the same. For example, the intercourse of an unmarried man with an unmarried woman, as the lawyers say, is called sexual misconduct. But circumstances make one man's sexual misconduct more grievous than another's unchaste behaviour: for example, if the one erred by chance with an immodest woman, but the other laid seige to the innocence of a chaste virgin with flattery, gifts, wine, and finally with the assistance of bawds. For this too is a kind of poisoning.

To this type of amplification belong those cases where contraries are compared among themselves with the result that the difference appears greater and more striking; for instance, if you put a fine purple beside a purple of an inferior dye, the former will seem brighter and the latter duller, or if you should pair an ugly girl with a remarkably attractive one, and the former will seem more attractive and the latter uglier. Thus if a preacher, wishing to praise frugality, should, by way of contrast, demonstrate how foul a thing is indulgence and drunkenness, then exaggerating the ugliness of the vice will increase the charm of the virtue; likewise, if urging people to be forgiving, he will dwell on the vice of anger and truculence. When promoting generosity, he will show what an ugly vice is greed. When inspiring towards the study of literature, he will show by contrast how wretched an animal is man without literature, rather how man is not man and life is not life. Likewise, in urging the blessings of peace, he will show how foul, how wretched, how accursed a thing is war.[297]

The same thing is done in comparing similars, examples, and persons that are remarkable for some virtue or for a vice contrary to it. For instance, there is an image of constancy in the sun, in the palm, in squared stone, of inconstancy in the moon, a reed, and the Euripus. [298] Again, there is an example of dutifulness towards parents in storks,[299] an example of the contrary in snakes,[300] in chickens an example of careful rearing, which even the

* * * * *

297 Cf *Querela pacis* CWE 27 289–322.

298 Euripus is the narrow body of water between Euboea and Boeotia in Greece, noted for 'the prodigious speed with which the Euripus ebbs and flows' and to its frequent tides (seven) throughout the day (*Adagia* I ix 62).

299 See Aelian *De natura animalium* 3.23: 'When their parents have grown old, Storks tend them voluntarily and with studied care; yet there is no law of man that bids them do so; the cause of their actions is Nature. And the same birds love their offspring too.' See also CWE 28 294 n7.

300 For 'snakes,' see Aelian *De natura animalium* 1.24: baby snakes 'gnaw through their mother's belly and forthwith emerge and avenge their father,' who had been killed by their mother.

Lord used in the Gospel,[301] a different one in eagles,[302] who push eggs from the nest if there are more than three, and that to avoid the tedium of feeding them. Likewise, there is an example of a gentle and patient nature in Jacob, of a fierce and violent one in Esau.[303]

What I shall add is also pertinent to comparison, at least in my own opinion. I showed a little earlier that some things increase when what seemed equal or even lesser is shown to be greater. Different from this is when what is serious in everyone's opinion and has been magnified by us is diminished in turn when compared with that which we are now exalting. No example more suitable for understanding this can be devised than the one adduced from Cicero *In Verrem*:[304] 'These things are slight in this accused. A ship's captain from a most outstanding city paid a bribe to relieve his fear of a beating: that's only human. Another paid to avoid being struck: it's common practice.'[305] The listener expects some hideous and monstrous deed in comparison to which things that are inherently very cruel are 'humane' and 'common practice.'

The following will be an example concerning persons: 'In everyone's judgment the most laudable emperor was Trajan;[306] more laudable was the philosopher Marcus Aurelius.'[307] The virtues of both should not be minimized – for it is a grudging sort of praise to darken what is bright in order to brighten what you have placed in the foreground, as painters do – but should rather be exalted, then to make[308] superior to them the one whom you have undertaken to glorify. Everyone agrees that Nero[309] was the wickedest prince; but someone in comparison with whom you could say that Nero can seem a good prince will seem more than wickedest.

* * * * *

301 Matt 23:37
302 Cf Pliny *Naturalis historia* 10.4.13.
303 For Jacob and Esau, see Genesis 25, 27–8; Mal 1:1–3; Rom 9:13.
304 Cicero *In Verrem* II 5.44.117; cited by Quintilian 8.4.19.
305 Chomarat (ASD V-5 58) does not note that Erasmus cites the passage in Quintilian's version, with *nauarchus nobilissimae civitatis* 'a ship's captain from a most outstanding city,' rather than Cicero's original, with *navarchus, homo nobilissimus suae civitatis* 'a ship's captain, the most outstanding man of his city.' (Translator's note)
306 Trajan: Marcus Ulpius Traianus, born AD 53, ruled as Roman emperor from 98–117.
307 Marcus Aurelius, born AD 121, ruled 161–80.
308 The apparent incoherence is due to Erasmus himself; the infinitive 'to make' (*facere*) has no construction. (Translator's note)
309 Nero: Nero Claudius Caesar, born AD 37, ruled 54–68.

The same procedure is valid in magnifying virtues and vices. For example, after exalting the other benefits that accompany godliness, someone who is encouraging piety would add the peace of a mind at ease with itself, freedom of the spirit, having peace with God, communion with all the saints, becoming a child of God instead of the devil's slave, the spiritual solace that the prophet says cannot be conceived by man: 'What greater thing than these, what more honourable, what more happy can be imagined or hoped for? And yet these things can seem slight if compared to that blessed share of immortal life that surely awaits all who cultivate piety in this world.'[310] It will be possible to bring out the meaning of impiety in the same way, indeed of anything that is to be shunned or pursued.

There is again another method of amplification, which Quintilian calls ratiocination,[311] when the listener gathers the greatness of what we are seeking to amplify from what follows or precedes or is present in the text. It is from what precedes when Homer arms Achilles, Hector, and Mars[312] for war; we reason from this preparation that the fighting will be fierce. Of the same sort is what Virgil says about the winds released by Aeolus: 'And the winds as if in battle array / Rush where an opening is offered and blast the earth with a whirlwind.'[313] We gather from such a violent eruption of all the winds how savage a storm there is going to be upon the sea.

The inference in Cicero's account of Antony's vomiting is from what follows: 'You with those jaws of yours, those flanks of yours, that gladiator-like strength of your entire body.'[314] It seems superfluous to say this, since jaws, flanks, and a gladiator-like strength of body do not contribute to drunkenness, but their addition is in no way superfluous inasmuch as we infer from them how much wine Antony had guzzled at Hippias' wedding, since for all the strength of his entire body, he could not tolerate it but was compelled to vomit it up at a time when it was least appropriate, on the next day in fact; for it is not so uncommon for recent food or drink to burst forth.

* * * * *

310 Erasmus' reference to this prophet and his writing is obscure; Chomarat suggests Hos 13:14.

311 Quintilian 8.4.3, 15–20; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.16.23 ('Reasoning by question and answer')

312 *Iliad* 19.364–97, 13.802–5, 17.188–97, 5.594, and 15.119–20

313 Virgil *Aeneid* 1.82–3; cf Quintilian 8.4.18, who cites lines 81–2.

314 Cicero *Philippics* 2.25.63; cited by Quintilian 8.4.16

Virgil's phrase about Polyphemus, 'A broken pine guides his hand,'[315] seems to allow an inference from the statement itself, for we infer from it the great size of his whole body when his hand held a pine tree for a staff.

But if someone prefers ecclesiastical examples, here is one: 'To free the human race from Satan's tyranny and claim it for God, God's Son became man and endured the punishment of the cross,' for we reason from this what a horrible thing is sin, what a wretched servitude it is to be Satan's serf, how terrible is God's anger, how great is God's love towards the human race, which he was willing to save in so wonderful a way. But this example is from things that precede if it is referred to us; it will be from things that follow if applied to those who lived before the Saviour's coming. Similarly, when we expatiate on the unending torments of hell, the thoughtful listener will gather mentally how foul a thing is sin, since God, who is by nature most merciful, punishes it so fiercely.

As an example of an inference from what is embodied in the text, there is the woman in the Gospel who burst uninvited into a banquet of haughty Pharisees and anointed the feet of Jesus, as they watched, and wet them with her tears and wiped them with her hair;[316] from this we infer the greatness of her penitence, which drove out all the woman's shame and fear.

David mourning so painfully the death of Absalom provides an example of an inference from things that follow;[317] from this we infer how great was his devotion towards his son whom he so greatly missed, though he was impious and plotting his father's destruction.

There is a type of ratiocination in which something is augmented from something else, as follows: Homer hugely exalts the courage of Hector in order to magnify Achilles as being the only one capable of killing him,[318] and Virgil amplifies the courage of Turnus to make the courage of the victorious Aeneas more glorious,[319] and historians, by exaggerating Hannibal's greatness in warfare, exalt the glory of Scipio, who defeated him.[320]

Sometimes augmentation is derived from other things through ratiocination, for example, if you should say that Bassus catches his belly's

* * * * *

315 Virgil *Aeneid* 3.659; cited by Quintilian 8.4.24, who notes: 'For what an image it gives of the bulk of that body . . .'
316 Luke 7:36–50
317 2 Sam 19:1–7
318 *Iliad* passim
319 See Virgil *Aeneid* 7–12.
320 Quintilian 8.4.20

discharge in a vessel of gold, from which one gathers how great his luxury was in banquets and other things, or if you should say that someone tramples on jewels in his shoes. Cicero's phrase on Antony's luxury is similar, when he says, '. . . in the rooms of this man's slaves beds covered with the empurpled counterpanes of Pompey.'[321] Here the listener gathers at once how extravagant was Antony's luxury in other matters when in his rooms, and in the rooms of this man's slaves were not tables but beds covered with counterpanes, and not just any but empurpled ones, and those of so notable a figure as Pompey for whom everything exceptional was fitting.[322] Every detail contributes to the augmentation, both those that are diminished and those that are augmented.

Now, if we also count the forms of amplification whenever augmentation is drawn from instrument and occasion and person, I'm afraid it might go on indefinitely.

From instrument: for example, when we gather from the shield of Ajax, which they relate was stitched together from the hides of seven oxen,[323] and from the spear of Achilles,[324] which no Greek could carry except Patroclus alone, how powerful the man himself was; from the bow that none of the suitors could bend one gathers the strength of Ulysses.[325] Thus the weight of Goliath's cuirass is described in the book of Kings, and his bronze shield and the weight of the iron that was added to his spear;[326] from these we get the idea how mighty was the man whom David cast down. And in turn David's victory was made more glorious by diminishing: he was a boy, he was not accustomed to bearing arms, he was of moderate stature, he was armed only with a sling and five stones.[327]

From occasion: for example when Socrates' unshakeable continence is gathered from the fact that he could not be influenced by the ready availability of a pleasure that many pursued.[328]

From person: for example when we conjecture how outstanding was Helen's beauty from the fact that in Homer Priam calls her 'daughter' and

* * * * *

321 Cicero *Philippics* 2.27.67
322 See Cicero *Philippics* II 2.27; Quintilian 8.4.25.
323 Homer *Iliad* 7.219–23; see Quintilian 8.4.24.
324 Homer *Iliad* 16.141–2; Quintilian 8.4.24
325 Homer *Odyssey* 21
326 1 Sam 17:4–7
327 1 Sam 17:12–58
328 See Alcibiades' speech in Plato's *Symposium* 215A–222B; and Quintilian 8.4.23.

says that she was not the cause of such a deadly war,[329] and this was said not by Paris or another youth but by Priam, an old man afflicted by so many disasters, bereft of so many children.

It will be possible to make an argument from place as follows: if someone should be said to have been honest in Athens[330] and to have lived frugally in the court of a prince; from time, if someone should be said to have been occupied with Holy Scripture for thirty years in fervent zeal (as Jerome writes about himself),[331] from which we conjecture how great was his experience in the divine texts; from age, because modesty is more remarkable in a youth than in an old man; from sex – fortitude is more deserving of acclaim in a woman than in a man; from condition – fidelity is more admirable in a slave towards a master than in a friend towards a friend, and praise that comes from an enemy has more weight; from difficulty – we stress how difficult it is to live like angels in the flesh so that virginity may appear more impressive; from rarity, as when Cicero infers the greatness of eloquence from the fact that, though so many had been highly accomplished in other studies, few had excelled in this one.[332]

In short, it will be possible to draw amplification from all the circumstances that were discussed before or any others that will be devised. For example, an outstanding deed is more glorious if someone has accomplished it alone or was the first to do it or did it with few others or played the chief role in it or performed it frequently to acclaim; for then it will seem great because it was accomplished not by chance but by one's personal qualities and good sense. Something that is accomplished not so much by fortune's favour as by choice and determination is altogether more attractive. Enos is praised because he was the first to invoke the name of the Lord.[333] Christ is praised because he alone was free of all stain.[334] Noah is commended because only

* * * * *

329 *Iliad* 3.162–4; Quintilian 8.4.21–2

330 See *Adagia* IV i 53; cf Plato *Laws* 1 (642C) ('When an Athenian is a good man, he is exceptionally good . . .').

331 See Jerome *Commentarii in prophetas minores, In Abdiam* prologus CCSL 76 350.

332 Cicero *De oratore* 1.2.6–22, especially 1.2.6–8: 'For in whatever direction you turn your mind and thoughts, you will find very many excelling in every kind [of renown], not merely of ordinary arts, but of such as are almost the greatest . . . of men excelling in oratory [there is] a mere handful'; and 1.2.16: 'And considering all this, who would not rightly marvel that, in all the long record of ages, times, and states, so small a number of orators is to be found?'

333 Gen 4:26: 'But to Seth also was born a son, whom he called Enos: this man began to call upon the name of the Lord.'

334 See John 8:46.

he and a few others were saved.[335] The Spartans are commended because three hundred of them slowed Xerxes' boundless horde at Thermopylae.[336] Paul's glory is increased by the fact that, though afflicted so often by the most grievous misfortunes, he never lost his zeal in advancing the gospel.[337]

Now, there is the same pattern in contraries. Cain is more abominable because he was the first to introduce the precedent of parricide,[338] just as Lamech is criticized for being the first to violate monogamy,[339] and Paul makes more loathsome the crime of someone who had married his father's wife with the criticism that he had been the only one to perpetrate a disgraceful act of a kind unheard of even among pagans,[340] though here there is also αὔξησις [increase] from the sort of person he professed to be. Ananias was punished especially severely, together with his wife Sapphira, because out of all the disciples he dared to lie to the Holy Spirit.[341]

And not from circumstances only but also from loci, except that circumstances themselves are loci: for example, Cato the Elder is supposed to have been prosecuted forty times and always to have been acquitted on the jurors' vote;[342] from this outcome we gather two things: the incorruptibility of Cato's character and the great dislike to which his severity was exposed.

Emphasis also adds augmentation; this is done with significant words that impart more to the imagination than if the matter were expressed in plain words.[343] Metaphor holds sway here and the figures of speech that consist of it: parable, allegory, catachresis,[344] image.[345] For when we hear 'The man was gnashing his teeth,' we imagine more than if he had said, 'He was indignant,' and when we hear 'There is no good man at whom he does not bark,' we understand more than if 'criticize' had been said. There is an emphasis in Virgil's phrase, 'While Caesar flashes lightning by the deep

* * * * *

335 Genesis 6–8
336 Herodotus 7.205–28
337 2 Cor 11:16–33
338 Gen 4:8–16
339 Gen 4:19–24
340 1 Cor 5:1
341 Acts 5:1–10
342 See book 2 672 n1081; see also Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia* 3.7.7, who says only that 'the elder Cato was often prosecuted by his enemies but never convicted on any charge'; and Plutarch *Cato maior* 15.4 (344F). Plutarch says that 'he was defendant in nearly fifty cases . . .'
343 See Quintilian 8.4.26.
344 For 'catachresis,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.33.45: 'the inexact use of a like and kindred word in place of the precise and proper one . . .'
345 Erasmus discusses these rhetorical figures below.

Euphrates,'[346] for we imagine more than if he had said 'wages war.' Again Jeremiah, when criticizing the Jews for their adulteries, said, not without emphasis, 'They became spies, each one whinnied at his neighbour's wife,'[347] and Paul spoke more emphatically when he said, 'Whose god is the belly'[348] than if he had said, 'Who serve their own livelihood.' But we said something above about this as well,[349] and there will be an opportunity for saying more later inasmuch as these figures hold first place in every form of rhetorical excellence, whether you consider eloquence or vividness or probability or forcefulness or brilliance and amplitude or pleasantness and grace.

Quintilian adds *συναθροισμός* or accumulation,[350] but he distinguishes this from the figure of the same name. Here accumulation is the multiplication of words or expressions that, as it were, drive home the same thing, differing from increment in that there the language increases by steps, here in a sort of heap. Cicero made remarkable use of this form in the speech *Pro Ligario* that he delivered before Julius Caesar: 'For what was that sword of yours doing, Tubero, when drawn in the battle line at Pharsalus? Whose flank was that point attacking? What was the intention of your arms? What of your mind, your eyes, your hands, the fire of your spirit? What were you desiring? What were you hoping?'[351] They say that Caesar changed colour at this part of the speech. So many words here mean the same thing – 'sword,' 'point,' 'arms'; 'intention,' 'mind,' 'spirit'; 'desiring,' 'hoping' – and so many expressions have the same reference – 'drawing a sword in the battle line,' 'attacking a flank,' 'the intention of arms.' Milder, but still of the same sort, is an example in Virgil: 'What of the boy Ascanius: does he survive and feed upon / The ethereal air, and not yet lie amid cruel darkness?'[352] All he is asking is whether Ascanius is still alive,

* * * * *

346 Virgil *Eclogues* 1.1 and *Georgics* 4.566

347 Jer 5:8. Erasmus' Latin reading is *emissarii* [spies, scouts] *facti sunt*; the Vulgate rendering is *admissarii* [stallions, stud horses] *facti sunt*. Interestingly Jerome's commentary has 'stallions': see *In Hieremiam libri VI* CCSL 74 54 1: *Equi amatores in feminas et admissarii facti sunt mihi . . .* There seems little doubt that Erasmus intended *admissarii*. The error presumably arose from a slip on the part of an amanuensis or the printer. The translator follows Chomarat's text.

348 Phil 3:19

349 See 697, 708, 721, 727 above.

350 For *συναθροισμός* 'collection,' 'heaping up,' see Quintilian 8.4.27; see 646, 727–8 above.

351 Cicero *Pro Ligario* 3.9, cited by Quintilian 8.4.27.

352 Chomarat notes Erasmus' conflation of two passages from Virgil *Aeneid*: 3.339 and 1.547.

but the threefold expression of the same thing is emotional; 'does he survive' would be enough, but he adds, 'and feed upon the ethereal air,' and not content with this he tacks on, 'and not yet lie among cruel shades?' The preacher will have frequent use for this sort of amplification whenever the subject demands emotion. I won't hold up the reader with examples, because everyone will be able to devise his own easily according to this pattern. And examples of this sort fall flat unless preceded by something to prepare the listener for the emotion. Something similar happens to us in setting down the rules as happened to others in declaiming, for walking about, darting forward, rotating the right arm, and other things that were appropriate to pleading cases looked silly in declamation and were ridiculed. Whatever has been said so far about augmentation is also valid for diminution.[353]

But the most effective sort of amplification is when things that have been augmented and things that have been diminished are set together and illuminate each other in turn, for instance, if after stressing God's kindnesses towards us we were to minimize our worship of him. To be sure, nearly every diminution involves an increment, though not of the same thing; for example, making light of our worship of God increases our ingratitude, and amplifying God's beneficence towards us does the same thing.

There is another use of contraries that contributes to forcefulness. For example, someone who is criticizing bad priests for living in idleness and luxury, for keeping concubines, for gambling, for hunting and making war, for serving greed will make the same point more sharply by joining contraries to these: 'Their zeal for piety and their sobriety is luxury; their mortification of the flesh is concubines; their nightly prayers are the dice; their sermons are hunting and weapons; their scrutiny of Scripture is greed.' Of this form is the passage in Isaiah 3: 'And there shall be a stench instead of a sweet odour, and a rope instead of a girdle, and baldness instead of wavy hair, and a hair shirt instead of a band about the breasts.'[354]

In addition, diminution, like amplification, is derived from words and things alike. An example of each can be shown in a single utterance of Cicero. Concerning Rullus' speech he says, 'Yet the few who stood nearby suspected that he wanted to say something about the agrarian law.'[355] In saying 'few' and 'stood nearby,' he derived his diminution from the situation; on the other hand, in saying 'something' and 'wanted to say' and 'suspected,'

* * * * *

353 For 'diminution,' see Quintilian 8.4.1 (*minuendum*) and 8.6.73.
354 Isa 3:24
355 Cicero *De lege agraria* II 5.13; cited by Quintilian 8.4.28.

the diminution has been derived from words, and this same diminution also underscores the incomprehensibility of the speech.[356]

There are also many other figures that contribute to augmentation or diminution, but it will be more convenient to do that when we show briefly what figures are conducive to rhetorical excellence.

Now, the very affinity of the subjects suggests that we say something about emotions.[357] Since both the Greeks and the Romans have given accurate and copious instructions on these, both how they are distinguished and the ways of arousing them, it is not my purpose to rehash common knowledge on this topic; we shall only run through the chief divisions of the subject and give the advice that is useful to our preacher.

Rhetoricians assign the prize to this: the ability to influence judges through the force of language and to exercise such control over them that already they make clear their judgment upon the case with their tears and their whole countenance before they pronounce it.[358] Aristotle does not approve of confusing whoever is going to pronounce judgment in court cases, especially since the speaker is seldom a good man and has but one aim, to win his case;[359] and yet this ability is almost a necessity for someone who is speaking before an uneducated and untrained crowd, first because you would sooner inflame than teach, drag than lead a dull-witted and yawning mob, next because most ordinary people sin more from a corruption of the emotions than from ignorance of the truth. For example, everybody knows that drunkenness, adultery, and profit won by fraud are crimes, but

* * * * *

356 It is clear from the passage in Cicero's *De lege agraria* 2.13 that Cicero is claiming that no one understood what Rullus was saying.

357 Erasmus takes up this most important consideration of 'emotions' (*affectus*) throughout *Ecclesiastes;* for this is what the preacher must strive with skill and energy to 'move' (*movere*) for his preaching to be effective. In sacred oratory, an understanding of how God's grace works, or cooperates, in this process is equally crucial; Erasmus, however, nowhere proposes a theological explanation of this. For the idea of 'moving' in the ancient writers, see: Quintilian 6.2; Aristotle *Rhetoric* 2.1–11; Cicero *De oratore* 2.44.185–2.53.216. See especially *Moria* CWE 27 104 where Folly speaks: 'It's admitted that all the emotions belong to Folly, and this is what marks the wise man off from the fool; he is ruled by reason, the fool by his emotions. That is why the Stoics segregate all passions from the wise man, as if they were diseases . . .'

358 See Quintilian 6.2.6–7. Quintilian goes on to say: 'For it is in its power over the emotions that the life and soul of oratory is to be found.' For more on the emotions, see book 2 490, 509, 518–9, 567–9, and passim.

359 Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1.1.5 (1354a); see also 1.2.3 (1356a) and 2.1.1 (1377b)–2.1.4 (1378a).

base desires drag people off course to what they do not approve. In these circumstances it will be appropriate to drive out emotions with emotions, like a nail with a nail.[360] Moreover, many take too kind a view of their own faults and consider those to which they have become habituated to be minor flaws; here amplification will be useful. Finally, some can hardly be taught at all because everything puts them to sleep unless they are stirred by emotion; hence the words of that famous Peripatetic are not inappropriate, that 'the goads of the emotions have been given to us by nature as teachers towards virtue, for example, anger towards fortitude, love and mercy towards beneficence, shame and fear towards innocence.'[361] Hence it is that the advocate, provided he is a good man,[362] courts good will for himself and for the accused right at the beginning, not so that he may deceive the judge but so that emotion may act as an allurement and render him more attentive to the case and more receptive to instruction. This is why John the Baptist used fear to prepare the minds of the Jews: 'Generation of vipers, who advised you to flee the anger to come?'[363] and 'Now the axe has been laid to the root of the tree.'[364] The disciples began similarly: 'Do penitence, since the kingdom of heaven is approaching,'[365] and the Lord: 'Every tree that has not borne fruits shall be cut down and cast into the fire.'[366] This is why we use grief, joy, shame, praise, hope, and fear to give children their first training towards virtue. By teaching we aim at making our listener understand, by emotion at making him love or hate; but according to St Paul, 'Knowledge puffs up, love builds.'[367] If there is not the addition of understanding, its only result is that a man who knows but does not do God's will is flogged with more strokes; as well, no one is appointed as a judge unless he is moderately knowledgeable about law and affairs. But before whom does the preacher have to speak? I'm not talking now about a mob of villagers and farmers but about a public assembly with an indiscriminate mix of children, elders, maidens and whores,

* * * * *

360 For 'like a nail with a nail,' see *Adagia* I ii 4 *Clavum clavo pellere* 'To drive out one nail by another.'

361 'That famous Peripatetic': ie Aristotle. Chomarat suggests that Erasmus is recalling Cicero's summary of Aristotle; see Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 4.19.43.

362 See Quintilian 6.2.8–35, where he discusses the 'appeal to the emotions,' *ethos* and *pathos*.

363 Matt 3:7

364 Matt 3:10

365 Matt 3:2 and 4:17

366 Matt 3:10; Luke 13:9

367 1 Cor 8:1

sailors, drivers, and shoemakers, among whom some are not much different from livestock so far as the capacity to be taught is concerned; it is in correcting or instructing[368] these that the emotions will have the greatest effect.

Moreover, it is generally agreed that there are two kinds of emotions, one gentler and more like those of comedy, the other more powerful and tragic, and nothing forbids positing a middle ground between these, as I see Quintilian did.[369] The Greeks call the former ἤθη, the Latins *mores*.[370] The Greeks call the latter πάθη; since the Latins did not devise a specific word for them, some misuse the name of a genus for a species and call them 'emotions,' others 'perturbations' or 'mental disturbances,' others 'desires,' others 'diseases.'[371] Yet neither ἦθος in Greek nor *mores* in Latin strictly speaking denotes what we mean here, inasmuch as ἤθη in Greek are the character on the basis of which we are said to be, and are, good or bad; but that word has been distorted both by them and by us for didactic purposes, so that it signifies the common and more moderate emotions by which everyone is affected because they are natural and that are recognized by everyone and cause delight rather than disturbance.[372] Yet sometimes they move us even to the point of tears; of this sort is the love that parents have for their children,[373] though that of mothers is more indulgent, as is also the love of grandmothers for their grandchildren – this is why children who have been raised too delicately are generally called 'grandma's darlings.'[374] We may add the greater severity of uncles towards their nephews, the unfairness of

* * * * *

368 For 'correcting or instructing,' cf 2 Tim 3:16.

369 Quintilian 6.2.8–17

370 Quintilian 6.2.8–17

371 For 'diseases,' cf Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 3.9.19–3.13.28.

372 Quintilian 6.2.8–35

373 Quintilian 6.2.14

374 Erasmus uses the more portentious sounding *mammaethrepti*, from the Greek μαμμόθρεπτος, literally 'granny nourished' or perhaps 'teat nourished.' In addition to the reference noted by Chomarat (ASD V-5 70 356n) in the scholia to Aristophanes' *Frogs*, it is also found in Eustathius' commentary on the *Iliad* and in the lexographical sources Hesychius and the *Suda*. It would have been perhaps even better known to Erasmus' readers through its being the title of Giovanni Marchesini's popular *Mammotrectae*; for the many editions of the work, see Ludwig Hain *Repertorium bibliographicum: in quo libri omnes ab arte typographica inventa usque ad annum MD. typis expressi, ordine alphabetico vel simpliciter enumerantur vel adcuratius recensentur* (Stuttgart 1826–38) nn10551–74.

mothers-in-law towards their sons-in-law, worse than that of fathers-in-law, and of stepmothers towards their stepchildren; the inconstancy, vanity, and frailty of the female sex, cruelty in the male; greed and blandishment in a whore, in slaves a penchant for theft and hatred towards their masters; everyone's bias in favour of early adolescence; the moodiness, stinginess, and censorial severity of elders in rebuking the behaviour of the young; in soldiers lavish spending and boasting, lying in a pimp; in an Italian politeness and learning, in a German zeal for war; and likewise about countless others. An appropriate scattering of such emotions in the other parts of an address, but especially in narrations, renders it both credible and pleasant and, if less excited, at least not feeble either, for we see that sometimes spectators burst into tears not only at tragedies but at comedies as well if their characters are moral. But if this happens in stories that we know are artistically contrived, how much more will it be regular practice in those that are true and undoubted and thus pertinent to us. This class of emotions holds absolute sway in comedies, though it frequently occurs in tragedies too, especially Greek; Homer is felicitous in treating it, especially in the *Odyssey*, from which it is thought New Comedy was derived.[375] Yet you could find its sharp barbs in Sacred Scripture as well, for instance in the story that is told at Genesis 42[376] and some following chapters, likewise in the parable of the prodigal son returning to his senses in Luke[377] – indeed, a comedy of some elegance could be woven from it.[378]

To show the difference between ἤθη καὶ πάθη, Quintilian classifies the kind of affection that exists between parents and children and between friends and kin among the ἤθη; love he places among the πάθη, a word

* * * * *

375 See 'Comedy (Greek) New' in OCD 271–2; and for Greek comedy in general 268–71. Chomarat suggests Pseudo-Plutarch *De vita et poesi Homeri* CCXIV as the source of Erasmus' comment; see ASD V-5 71 at 371–2. See [Plutarch] *Essay on the Life and Poetry of Homer* ed J.J. Keaney and Robert Lamberton (Atlanta 1996): 'No less did comedy have its source here, for it found, in the author who described the most solemn and elevated things, episodes that provoke laughter . . .' (305). This essay was first printed in Demetrius Chalkokondyles' *editio princeps* of Homer (Florence: Demetrius Damilas 1488) 2. Erasmus uses the word 'new' (*novam comoediam*) although 'new comedy' is a species of comedy. See also *Classical Tradition* 'Comedy and the Comic' 217–25.

376 Genesis 42 is the account of Joseph's brothers in Egypt.

377 Luke 15:11–32

378 A 'comedy' in this context is a play that deals with ordinary human emotions, usually with a happy ending. See the various entries for 'Comedy' in OCD 268–72.

used for the sort of violent passion that tortures us and deprives us of judgment and peace of mind,[379] as Phaedra's love for Hippolytus is represented,[380] Medea's towards Jason, Dido's towards Aeneas: St Augustine, though he knew that this was a fiction composed falsely by Virgil about a chaste woman, nevertheless admits that as a young man he could not read it without tears.[381] The principal emotions of this kind are pity, indignation, love, and hate.[382]

Emotions of either kind are generally drawn from the same loci of which we said something earlier in passing, that is, from all the circumstances both of fact and of person, and not only from those from which proofs are drawn but from absolutely all of them, for there are circumstances that, though they contribute nothing to proof, still produce an emotional reaction. For instance, an insult is more shocking if directed against one who has treated you well than against someone who has rendered no such service, and the affliction of the innocent is more pitiful than that of the guilty; and it is more despicable to cheat someone who shows a simple trust than to cheat someone who is cautious and mistrustful, though being helpful or innocent or trusting do not contribute to proof. If someone is looking for examples of all of these, let him seek them from the books of the rhetoricians, especially from Macrobius, who enumerates them carefully in the fourth book of his *Saturnalia* from the works of Virgil and others.[383] I wonder what was the source from which Macrobius drew this passage, if not perhaps the work that Pliny the Elder wrote on rhetoric,[384] for it is Macrobius' habit, though he produces nothing original, to take remarkable care to conceal his authorities; it is clear that he took much word for word from the *Noctes Atticae* of Aulus Gellius but, as in everything else, without naming him.

Furthermore, it is more useful for a preacher than for advocates to

* * * * *

379 Quintilian 6.2.12; cf 6.2.9.

380 See Euripides *Hippolytus* and *Medea*; Seneca also wrote plays of the same name.

381 Augustine *Confessions* 1.13

382 See Quintilian 6.1.22–3; 6.2.12–35; also Aristotle *Rhetoric* 2.8–9.

383 Macrobius *The Saturnalia* trans Percival Vaughan Davies (New York and London 1969) 254–70. For Erasmus and Macrobius, see Ep 121 to Robert Gaguin, Paris, (March) 1499/1500.

384 For Pliny's work on rhetoric, see the reference of Pliny the Younger to this work of his uncle, Pliny the Elder, in his *Letter* 3.5.5: '*The Scholar* [*Studiosi*] – three volumes divided into six sections on account of their length, in which he trains the orator from his cradle and brings him to perfection.'

rouse the audience's emotions and rather easier as well, because many things of which he must speak are, first of all, of undoubted truth and are more sure than what we have perceived with the eyes and all the senses; then they are so great that in comparison to them everything that either happens in human affairs or has been devised by eloquent men to stir the emotions falls flat and seems a mere trifle.

First, what are the assertions of theology about the gods of the pagans but dreams if compared to the clear knowledge of the Holy Trinity divinely revealed to us?[385] Indeed, compared to Christ becoming man to save the human race, being born from a virgin, dying on the cross, being buried, rising from the dead, ascending into heaven, sitting at the right hand of God the Father, what are they but the tales of foolish old women? Jupiter lying with Alcmena in the guise of Amphitryon and spawning the fabled Hercules, with Mercury assisting as his sidekick,[386] or concealed in the false image of a man when lodging with Lycaon.[387]

What indeed are their mysteries but wicked delusions if compared to such sacraments and rites of the church as baptism or the Lord's Supper? What but pure superstition was prescribed to the initiates of Ceres or of Bacchus?[388] And is it not better to pass over in silence what was practised in those mysteries? But in ours, in fact, penitence for one's previous life is prescribed, and innocence is conferred through faith; various gifts of the Spirit are added that have no aim other than God's glory and mankind's salvation: 'What is Pythian Apollo,[389] striking his prophets with madness, compared to the heaven-sent Holy Spirit, which did not drive the disciples into insanity but increased the soundness of their minds

* * * * *

385 'Of the Holy Trinity' (*sacrae triadis*); Erasmus employs the word 'triad' (*trias*), ie the number three, over the traditional Latin theological term 'trinity' (*trinitas*) in referring to the triune God. Among the Greek Fathers the word *trias* (Greek ἡ τρίας) was the standard term for the Holy Trinity. See Lampe 1404 ἡ τρίας; see eg, Nazianzus *Oratio 23* 10.11 'Τριὰς ὡς ἀληθῶς ἡ Τριάς, ἀδελφοί.' The genetive of τρίας is generally rendered by the Greek Fathers as τριάδος (see ibidem 13.2): ''Ιδοὺ τῆς Τριάδος τὰ ἔργα . . .'

386 See Plautus *Amphitryon*.

387 See Ovid *Metamorphoses* 1.222–43.

388 At Rome Ceres (Greek Demeter), goddess of grain and agriculture, had a cult on the Aventine that involved initiation rites (cf Cicero *De legibus* 2.9.21, 2.15.37) and was celebrated in the *Ludi Ceriales*; see Augustine *De civitate Dei* 7.20. For Bacchus, Erasmus likely has in mind Euripides *The Bacchae*.

389 For Pythian Apollo, see Plato *Phaedrus* 244, which exalts the 'divine madness' brought on by the gods.

and made them aware of heavenly mysteries and invincible before all the terrors of the world and of Satan? And what are the Sibyl's leaves[390] or those little verses, for the most part a fabrication,[391] compared to the irrefutable authority of the prophets, the apostles, and all of canonical Scripture?'

Now compare the wisdom of the philosophers to evangelical and prophetic teaching: is the difference not like that between light and darkness?[392]

Let them exalt all they want their heroes like Codrus, Decius, and Curtius:[393] what are these but uninspired narratives (if they are not simply fictions) if you compare them with so many thousands of martyrs, who with great zeal strengthened the Christian commonwealth, the church, through monstrous tortures, through a thousand kinds of death?

Compare their incredible lies with our miracles. Daphne changed into a laurel tree (Apollo's delight), Io changed into a cow, Cadmus into a snake, the rustics into frogs, Arachne into a spider[394] – what are they but childish jests if compared to the many that were raised from the dead, to the many ailments and wicked demons that were put to flight at a word?[395]

* * * * *

390 For Sibyl's leaves,' see Virgil *Aeneid* 6.444 and 7.74; see also *Adagia* I vii 91 *Folium Sibyllae* 'A leaf from the Sibyl's book.'

391 The phrase 'or those verses, for the most part a fabrication' likely refers to the *Sibylline Oracles*, which in part were known to Erasmus and contemporaries from the Greek and Roman classical and early Christian authors; see eg, St Augustine *De civitate Dei* 18.23, where on the authority of Varro, he speaks of several Sibyls and quotes the *Sibylline Oracles* 8.217–50 (of the Erythraean Sibyl, 'or, as certain men prefer to believe, Cumaean Sibyl') that had been translated from Greek into Latin, noting that 'this Erythraean Sibyl clearly wrote down certain things made known about Christ.' Impressed by her utterances, Augustine declares, 'She is clearly to be assigned to the number of those who belong to the City of God'; he also relays some of the Sibyl's prophecies that he finds scattered in the writings of Lactantius. See also *Classical Tradition* 884–5 'Sibyls.'

392 Cf John 12:46; Acts 26:18; 2 Cor 6:14.

393 For Codrus, see *Adagia* II viii 33 *Generosior Codro* 'As nobly born as Codrus'; for Decius, see Livy *Ab urbe condita* 8.9.1–8.10.14. Publius Decius Mus was known for the *devotio* he made to the gods of the underworld so that the Roman army might be victorious over the Latins; Marcus Curtius devoted himself to death at the Forum in Rome 'to the gods below.' See Livy *Ab urbe condita* 7.6.1–6.

394 See Ovid *Metamorphoses* 1.452–567, 1.568–746, 4.563–603, 6.313–81, 6:1–145.

395 For 'at a word,' cf eg Luke 7:7.

They doubt whether gods exist at all,[396] and those who do believe doubt whether human affairs interest them;[397] we are convinced, and we know for a fact, that not even a little sparrow falls into a snare without divine providence.[398]

Moreover, what do they promise to the worshippers of the gods? Saturn grants victory with the dice on certain days;[399] Jupiter, than whom nothing is greater or better, according to them,[400] bestows wealth and power, Ceres an abundance of grain. And yet they provide none of these things; rather everything that is good flows from the one God. But supposing that they do give them, what are these things compared to what God promises his people through his Son? A hundredfold in this world and eternal life

* * * * *

396 In *De natura deorum* 1.1.2, Cicero states that 'Diagoras of Melos ['the Atheist' (ὁ ἄθεος)] and Theodorus of Cyrene held that there are no gods at all'; later he reviews many varieties of belief and unbelief among the ancients. Peter G. Bietenholz observes that we have no explicit statement from Erasmus that by 1500 he had ever read this work by Cicero ('but of course he may have read it anyhow'); see *Encounters with a Radical Erasmus: Erasmus' Work as a Source of Radical Thought in Early Modern Europe* (Toronto 2009) 114, 117, 273n. Even afterwards we find no mention of this work among the texts he had read. Like his testy response to the individual at Rome asking him to refute Pliny's argument for the mortality of the human soul, perhaps the many 'impious' philosophical statements against the immortality of the soul and the nature of the gods (or God) he would encounter in *De natura deorum*, especially in book 3, were ones he neither could recommend to be read by others nor admit to having read himself; see book 2 690. If anything he would agree with the final words of book 2 of *De natura deorum*: 'It is a wicked, impious practice to call the gods into question whether it's done sincerely or insincerely' (*Mala enim et impia consuetudo est contra deos disputandi, sive ex animo id fit sive simulate*). For the 1471 *editio princeps* (*editiones principes*) of the *De natura deorum,* see Cicero *De natura deorum: Book 1* ed Andrew R. Dyck (Cambridge 2003) 15.

397 See Cicero *De natura deorum* 1.2.3: 'For there are and have been philosophers who hold that the gods exercise no control over human affairs whatever.' Cicero later identifies Epicurus as espousing this opinion; see *De natura deorum* 1.16.43–5.

398 Cf Matt 10:29.

399 Chomarat notes that the Romans played dice a great deal during the Saturnalia; see Suetonius *Divus Augustus* 71.3; see Martial 4.14.7, 11.6.2. Chomarat notes too that Erasmus misconstrues the meaning of these passages; ASD V-5 75 440–1n.

400 Jupiter was referred to formally as *Iupiter Optimus Maximus*. Christians would change this later to *Deus Optimus Maximus* (D.O.M.).

in the one to come.[401] The one who said a hundredfold said far less than the actual fact; he would have said less even if he had said a thousandfold, so great a thing is a mind at peace with itself and ever eager and secure through hope of eternal happiness. Diana unleashed the Calydonian boar in anger,[402] Juno a storm in her hostility to the Trojans;[403] even if these things are true, what are they in comparison to hell?

Why go on at length? Everything in what the preacher treats is so great, so sure, so outstanding, so ardent that the simple narration, even without amplifying, wrings tears from the hardest persons. Moreover, there is nothing here that is not relevant to each one of us, 'for everything is ours and we are Christ's.'[404] Tears burst forth when the role of Alcestis is acted,[405] who was ready to die in her husband's place; but even if these things truly happened, what have they to do with us? Does the love of some poor woman for her husband move us so, while the love of Christ our Saviour for us does not move us equally? But he is all ours and we his; he is our Lord, he is our brother, he is our head, he is our friend because, though he was so great, he spent himself completely for us.[406] Once they used to bewail the death of Adonis slain by a boar,[407] and we can scarcely read the suicide of Carthage's queen with dry eyes;[408] and yet we read and hear without weeping the cruel and all too true torments of so many innocent men, so many devout virgins, and we do not reflect that they are all our brothers and sisters in Christ and members of the same body, with whom we hope for a blessed association in heaven. Nevertheless, the aim of the preacher should not be to make us bewail in the common fashion either Christ's death or the cruel agonies of the saints who are already triumphing victoriously in heaven, but to make admiration for them sweep us into zeal for emulation.[409] Often an account of

* * * * *

401 Cf Matt 19:29.

402 'Calydonian boar,' see Homer *Iliad* 9.524–98; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 8.260–525; Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 1.8.2–3.

403 Virgil *Aeneid* 1.34–156

404 See 1 Cor 3:22–3.

405 See Euripides *Alcestis*. Alcestis was the faithful wife of Admetus and gave her life that he might live.

406 Cf Phil 2:7.

407 Ovid *Metamorphoses* 10.503–739; Theocritus *Idylls* XV (The Women at the Adonis Festival); see also Bion *Epitaphius Adonis* (*The Lament for Adonis*).

408 Virgil *Aeneid* 4.584–705. Erasmus echoes Augustine's remarks in *Confessions* 1.13; see 794 above.

409 'To make admiration for them sweep us into zeal for emulation': this is the purpose of epideictic rhetoric. The panegyrist amplifies the deeds of heroic Christians to instil in his listeners the desire to emulate them.

one man's great devotion towards another drives us to tears, like the story of the girl who long nourished her captive mother with her milk,[410] not because her devotion was pitiable but because good will and joy have their own tears.

Certainly the preacher will often have to try the effect of the emotion of compassion when he exhorts his hearers to help the needy, or to encourage or console those afflicted with disease or human injustice or some other disaster, or those in danger as the result of desperation from awareness of their misdeeds; Christ wept for Lazarus,[411] and he was moved to compassion when he beheld the ignorant mob scattered like sheep and wandering for lack of a shepherd.[412] But this emotion has a broader application than the common man thinks. When we see a man sallow with disease, full of sores, needy, shrieking in pain, we are distressed by the mere perception of his physical condition; but far more wretched than he is the one who has a mind leprous with heretical errors, devoid of all virtues, dead from lust, greed, envy, hatred, and other fatal diseases, ulcerous with disgrace, tormented by the pricks of conscience. We see a man who has lost the use of his eyes, and we take pity, thinking what a bitter thing it is to live in perpetual darkness, or rather not live but exist, and never look upon the light of the sun; but infinitely more pitiable is the man who, blinded by the desires of the flesh, stumbles in the dark and cannot raise his eyes to the light of everlasting truth. Likewise, if we see a man bound in irons in a foul dungeon, we shed tears thinking how sweet is freedom and what weariness he suffers; but how much more wretchedly captive are they whom Satan holds bound in the inextricable chains of sin and destined for hell. And just as none are more incurably ill than those who do not know that they are ill, as happens in the case of the deranged and delusional because they are afflicted on both accounts, so none are more wretched than those who, given over to an evil understanding,[413] sit in the chair of pestilence, rest content amid their vices, or even exult in what is wickedest; Lazarus four days dead[414] is the type of these men, and in weeping for him the Lord showed us how pitiable are those who have developed a callus from their habit of sinning so that they lack a sense of evil, or those who are infected with impious doctrines

* * * * *

410 See Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia* 5.4.7.
411 John 11:35
412 Cf Matt 9:36.
413 For 'given over to an evil understanding,' cf Rom 1:28; *Annotationes in Romanos* CWE 56 58–60, and *Paraphrasis in epistolam ad Romanos* CWE 42 18.
414 Cf John 11:39.

and think that they are full of pious wisdom. But just as there is a certain cruelty of man towards himself, so there is also pity: 'He who neglects his reputation is cruel,'[415] says the Hebrew sage, and 'Take pity on your soul by pleasing God.'[416] But if we call 'cruel' those who attack their own body, how much crueler are those who surrender themselves completely to Satan, hurling body and soul into everlasting destruction. Therefore, the preacher will display his δείνωσις [forcefulness][417] to make those who are so pitiably pitiable pity themselves,[418] so that they flee for refuge to the mercy of the Lord, like fugitives from a cruel master.

This emotion, moreover, is particularly evoked by innocence or age or weakness, or the magnitude of a disaster, or kinship, or the power and violence and cruelty of those who injure, or by previous good fortune. We are more powerfully moved by the ills of those who suffer woefully without guilt on their part or are even rewarded with suffering for their good deeds. So we grieve more easily at the woes of children or the elderly, as also at those of wards, the poor and the destitute, and finally those of women more than those of men. Likewise, we are more quickly turned towards pity if the disaster is novel, if sudden, if unusual. This is why we also shed tears

* * * * *

415 Erasmus gives 'the Hebrew sage' as the source of this quotation, but the words are not from Scripture; the first instance of this exact quotation appears in Augustine *Sermo 355*: 'qui confidens conscientiae suae neglegit famam suam, crudelis est: maxime in loco isto positus, de quo loco dicit apostolus scribens ad discipulum suum: circa omnes te ipsum bonorum operum praebens exemplum' (CCSL 41 124:13); see also WSA III-10 165. It is clear from Augustine's words that the saying is his own: 'Mark what I've said, and make the distinction. There are two things, conscience and reputation; conscience for yourself, reputation for your neighbor. Those who, being clear in their consciences, neglect their reputations, are being cruel; especially if they find themselves in this position, a position about which the apostle says, when he writes to his disciple, "Showing yourself to all around you as an example of good works" (Ti [Titus] 2:7).'

416 Ecclus 30:24

417 For δείνωσις see Quintilian 6.2.24: 'For the force of eloquence is such that it not merely compels the judge to the conclusion towards which the nature of the facts lead him, but awakens emotions which either do not naturally arise from the case or are stronger than the case would suggest . . . that is to say, language giving additional force to things unjust, cruel or hateful, an accomplishment in which Demosthenes created immense and special effect.' See also Hermogenes *On Types of Style* trans Cecil W. Wooten (Chapel Hill 1987) 101–8.

418 See Quintilian 6.1.23: 'But the appeal that will carry most weight is the appeal to pity, which not merely forces the judge to change his views, but even to betray his emotion by tears . . .'

at the more shocking punishments of criminals. It is also ingrained in our nature to be the more powerfully moved the nearer each person is by degree either of relation or of friendship, so much so that we are more seriously affected by the afflictions of our children, wives, or faithful friends than by our own. The preacher will stress their innocence to arouse pity for those who have fallen into poverty not through extravagance but because of war or shipwreck or disease or some similar mischance, even more if they are being treated badly by their children and kin or by people whom they have treated well. Likewise, generosity is to be bestowed readily upon the elderly because their age, bereft of natural strength, needs another's protection, more readily upon childhood, which does not yet understand its dangers though prey to a variety of injustices. Thus Paul treats the Galatians with the greatest indulgence and gives birth to them a second time as infants still in Christ.[419] Loneliness and weakness make us more inclined to assist orphans, widows, and strangers. Thus exaggerating the calamity of sinners makes us forgive them the more easily and strive with greater zeal to help them. Moreover, someone who reflects that all Christians are brothers among themselves, that all are members of the same body,[420] that all are fellow slaves of the same Lord and allied by countless claims of friendship will find it impossible not to be moved by the woes of others. But we will pity more quickly those who are either engulfed in errors or entangled in crimes if we consider the great cunning and power of Satan and all the skills with which he is armed for ensnaring men – for there is nowhere that he is not laying traps for the weakness of human nature. Consideration of previous good fortune assists this, for just as those who have risen from a humble place to the highest rank are more open to envy, so we more quickly feel sorry for those who have tumbled from great success to great disaster.

Moreover, we solicit God's mercy on the basis of all these loci except that of innocence, which we cannot plead before him; we would accomplish it more quickly by amplifying our own wrongdoings. According to the rhetoricians, the status of *deprecatio* [plea for mercy][421] is very weak, confession dangerous: before God there is no status more effective. We make our plea from age, because human life is brief and fleeting; from weakness, because we have no hope of salvation except in God's mercy alone, since

* * * * *

419 Cf Gal 4:19.

420 Cf 1 Cor 12:12–14.

421 For the status of *deprecatio*, see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.14.24: 'It is the Plea for Mercy when the defendant confesses the crime and premeditation, yet begs for compassion.'

man of himself is good for nothing except for hell; from the greatness of the disaster, since this life is buffeted all about by woes; from kinship, since we are his creation, his servants though useless, his children though uncompliant; from the violence of the adversary, since our weakness is under attack on all sides, from the flesh, from the world, from Satan: from the flesh through our innate proclivity towards vice, from the world through the harassment of the wicked and temptations more harmful than harassment, from Satan through his impious suggestions; from previous good fortune, since we have been expelled through another's fault from the great delight of Paradise into this mournful exile.[422]

Furthermore, anger, hatred, and indignation are to be stirred not so much against persons as against the vices themselves and against Satan, the father of vices. Such indignation leads to amendment of life both in others and in ourselves; this is how a physician is indignant at a disease when he wants to cure someone. But if it should ever happen that a preacher is indignant at a person, his rebuke should be like that of a parent towards a child, so that the one criticized understands[423] that the only source of that anger is good will.

But the emotion of affection should be kindled in every possible way, Christian affection I mean, by which God is cherished above all as the supreme good, and whatever is cherished in creation is cherished for his sake, so that God himself is loved and glorified in everything. Moreover, whatever rouses love in us is supreme and ineffable in God. What is outstandingly good by nature is loved; he is perfect goodness. What is exceptionally beautiful draws towards love; nothing is more beautiful than he, to gaze upon him is the summit of happiness even for the very angels, who are the most beautiful thing after God. Now, as the proverbs say, 'Like is friend to like.'[424] Man was created in God's likeness[425] according to his better part, and God himself became man to make the resemblance fuller;[426] he

* * * * *

422 Cf Gen 3:22–4.

423 For 'understands,' Chomarat prints *intelliget* (future indicative), but no meaning of *ut* with the indicative seems appropriate here; I have translated as though the text read *intelligat* (present subjunctive) in a result clause. (Translator's note)

424 See *Adagia* I ii 21 *Simile gaudet simili* 'Like rejoices in like,' where Erasmus cites Aristotle *Nichomachean Ethics* 8.1.2 (1155b7) and 9.3.3 (1165b17). See CWE 31 167 n3 and 168 n3.

425 Gen 1:26

426 See Gerhard B. Ladner *The Idea of Reform: Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers* (New York 1967) for the origins of this idea in

took a human body and soul from a virgin, not as an illusion or as a covering but truly and according to nature, so that we men might love even a man, our flesh and our spirit. No virtue wins more powerful good will for a prince from his people than clemency;[427] he freely forgave us all sins, paid them for us himself. Love begets love, and a favour bears a favour;[428] he so first loved us, who were not only strangers but even enemies, that he gave his own Son for us.[429] Kinship and familiarity also win affection: he is twice Father to us – first he bore us so that we exist, then with his vivifying Word he gave us a second birth through his Only begotten to be children of the kingdom. We are his servants,[430] Christ's brothers and friends,[431] the members of the household of God, who lives in us through his Spirit.[432] But what wins love above all is kindness,[433] which is so powerful that it defies nature and turns into friends creatures that are naturally wild and hostile to man. What tongue then could say, what human mind imagine the great munificence towards us of this most kindly God,[434] how much he bestows in this world, how much he promises in the one to come? No one is any more able to form a worthy understanding of how great this is than anyone can understand how great is God himself, who gave himself completely for us; for all this he asks no other thanks than that we should love him in turn.[435] Moreover, whoever loves God has God; therefore he asks only that we live blessedly in him. Moreover, whoever is aflame with the fire of affection towards God cannot but burn towards his neighbour, who is closely associated on so many accounts.[436] 'But he's wicked'; 'he's a heretic'; 'he's a Jew' or 'pagan.' Love him for being human, for being capable of the same

* * * * *

Scripture and in the Fathers, with special emphasis on Augustine's theology.

427 See Cicero *De officiis* 1.25.88: 'For nothing is more commendable, nothing more becoming in a pre-eminently great man than courage and forbearance [*clementia*].' See also Seneca's treatise *De clementia*. In 1532, John Calvin published an edition of this treatise with a commentary; see *Calvin's Commentary on Seneca's 'De Clementia'* trans Ford Lewis Battles and André Malan Hugo (Leiden 1969).

428 Cf *Adagia* I i 34 *Gratia gratiam parit* 'One favour begets another' and *Adagia* I i 33 *Manus manum fricat* 'One hand rubs another.'

429 Cf John 3:16.

430 Cf 1 Pet 2:16.

431 Cf John 15:14–15.

432 Cf 1 Cor 3:16; 2 Tim 1:14.

433 'Kindness' (*beneficientia*)

434 See Erasmus' sermon on the similar topic, *De immensa Dei misericordia* CWE 70 69–139.

435 Cf Matt 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27; Deut 6:5.

436 Cf Matt 19:19, 22:39; Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; James 2:8.

favour that has been bestowed upon you; love even an enemy, for the very reason that he to whom you owe yourself has commanded it.[437]

To avoid becoming too prolix, I shall not extend my discussion concerning the stirring of the other emotions. I shall only repeat that which was said above and which it is useful to repeat often because it is the essence of this subject: that nothing is more effective for stirring devout emotions than having experienced godly feelings yourself, and nothing more useful for calming evil emotions than having been foreign to them yourself.[438] It was cleverly said that 'nothing burns but fire.'[439] A fiery mind makes a fiery tongue. Nor can fire do anything except burn if you approach too near. No one kindles the flame of godliness more effectively than one who is truly devout; no one calls back from vice more effectively than someone who himself hates vice sincerely, for through him the Spirit itself speaks and pours its gift into his listeners.[440] And this is not surprising, since true piety shining in the eyes, the face, and the whole state of the body transports and affects those who gaze upon it even without the addition of speech as a vehicle, for a habit that has once fixed its roots in the mind manifests itself everywhere, whether you are speaking or keeping silent or doing something or resting or eating or drinking or sleeping or waking – in sum whether you are playing or dealing with serious matters.[441]

Someone might say here, 'How does it happen, then, that some who live in open wickedness wring tears even from the unwilling in their sermons through the power of their oratory, while some weep themselves as well?' It would not be out of place to relate here what the Italians who have heard him say about Roberto Caracciolo of Lecce.[442] I shall not blab about

* * * * *

437 Matt 5:44; Luke 6:27–8, 35

438 Erasmus reiterates a principle given often by the rhetoricians; see eg Quintilian 6.2.26: 'The prime essential for stirring the emotions of others is, in my opinion, first to feel those emotions oneself . . .'

439 Quintilian 6.2.28. He continues: 'Fire alone can kindle . . . we should be moved ourselves before we attempt to move others.' Quintilian goes on to deal with the emotions and to give ways in which we can generate these emotions in ourselves, since 'emotion is not in our own power' (6.2.29).

440 See eg Acts 2 for the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and the eloquence resulting from this gift.

441 Erasmus expresses here the Platonic notion that posits a transparency of a person's interior virtues in his or her physical appearance, whether in the beauty of the eyes, face, comportment, etc. It is an extension of the Platonic notion of existents or actions participating in the realm of ideas by resembling in some degree those essences. See book 2 466–7.

442 For Roberto Caracciolo of Lecce (c 1425–95), see Emile V. Telle 'En marge

the man's life; I shall only say what is relevant to this matter: if what public gossip keeps saying about him is true, then he was a man endowed with a remarkable gift of speech. And at first he had been a member of the brotherhood that uses the appealing title of Observants to set themselves apart from the rest;[443] when he did not get along with them, he moved to the association of those who are generally called Conventuals, since he thought that their way of life was freer. When he was at a banquet attended also by a certain vicar from the group of the Observants (a learned man, pious and grave), and when, in order to refute someone else's charge that his sermons were unfruitful because his words were insincere and his life at odds with his words, he boasted that he could wring tears from his audience whenever he wished, the vicar said, 'From whom would you wring tears, except perhaps children or poor foolish women?' To this Robert said, 'Tomorrow, then, great man that you are, attend my sermon and stand in the place that I shall indicate for you so that I can keep my eye on you. If I do not wring tears, I shall be defeated and give an elegant feast; but if I do, you will be defeated and have it prepared for us' (for that sort regard touching coinage as taboo),[444] and they appropriately found a supporter of Francis among the banqueters to vouch in the vicar's name. It was agreed; the vicar attended, standing where he had been told. Then, when he had used many means to expand on God's love and kindness towards men and the ingratitude and hardness towards God of men, whom no incentives could soften towards penitence and mutual love, Robert apostrophized man's heart in God's name: 'Oh heart of more than iron, oh heart harder than steel! Iron melts in fire, steel is vanquished by goat's blood; though I try everything, I cannot extort even one little tear from you.' And he did not stop pressing his apostrophe with noisy

* * * * *

de l'éloquence sacré aux XVe–XVIe siècles, Erasme et Fra Roberto Caracciolo' *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et renaissance: Travaux et documents* 43:3 (1981) 449–70; and CEBR I 265–6.

443 'Observants' were members of the Order of Friars Minor who in 1517, by directive of Pope Leo X (1517–23), were separated from other Franciscans, the Conventuals, to follow a strict interpretation of the Rule of Saint Francis. The Conventuals, on the other hand, were permitted the practice of corporate property ownership. In 1536, another reform movement among the Franciscans resulted in the formation of a third group of Franciscans, the Capuchins, whose outstanding representative at the time Erasmus published the *Ecclesiastes* was the renowned preacher Bernardino Ochino (1487–1564), who after becoming general of the order in 1538 left the Capuchins in 1542 to join the Reform at Geneva. See 'Ochino, Bernardino' in ODCC 1172.

444 On touching money, see book 2 583 and n600.

shouts until the vicar broke into tears. As soon as he saw this, Robert held out his right hand and said, 'I've won.' The congregation thought that this was said in the character of God because some in that assembly could not hold their tears. But in the victory banquet, when Robert boasted of his win, the vicar made a clever evasion, saying, 'It was not your eloquence that made me weep but my own sorrow, as I considered how unworthy it was that so blessed a nature served the world rather than Christ.'

The preacher does not aim at these temporary emotions that cool quickly, for he is not an actor or a courtroom advocate. For an actor it is enough if his performance is consistent and wins the applause of the audience; for an advocate, unconcerned about what attitude a judge subsequently adopts or lays aside at home, it suffices to keep him convinced until he pronounces judgment. But the goal of the pious preacher is to leave in the minds of his listeners barbs that hold fast and to scatter upon them, as it were, good seed on good ground,[445] so that it exercises its power gradually until it bursts forth into the fruit of piety. Speech that is artless but proceeds from an ardent mind will accomplish this more quickly than that which is armed with all the rhetorical devices but flows from the lips and not from the heart.[446]

Perhaps it would not be inappropriate to relate here something that is told in ecclesiastical history.[447] Some prettily learned bishops were conferring with a man of outstanding erudition in order to convince him of baptism, and since their disputation was being long drawn out and was accomplishing nothing with those sharp philosophical reasonings against a man who was armed with the same weapons, one of the bishops, a pious but unsophisticated person, rose and prevailed upon the man with a brief and unlearned speech, saying, 'What, do you believe that the Lord Jesus became man and was crucified for us?' When he had replied that he did, he said, 'Why then are we wasting time with superfluous sophistries? Why don't we go to the basilica instead, and you receive there the symbols of your Prince and Redeemer?' He agreed; they went to baptism, and the disputation turned into a profession of faith. When asked later how he had given in so easily to a single inexperienced person when he could not be moved by so many men of learning, he said, 'While I listened to human reasons,

* * * * *

445 Cf Matthew 13.

446 Erasmus' comment here suggests his judgment of the Italian preachers in general, clerics who seem well outfitted with rhetorical devices but lack the heartfelt interiority that should be the first requirement of the preacher.

447 See *Sozomen* 1.18 253–4; see also Cassiodorus Epiphanius *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita* 2.3 CSEL 71 87–8.

I fought against human reasons; but as soon as I heard the Spirit talking, I yielded to the Spirit.' So there is nothing more powerful for rousing good emotions than having a fount of pious emotions in one's heart. Nevertheless, it is sometimes useful to waken, so to speak, a sleeping mental disposition so that the effectiveness[448] of the language is greater, inasmuch as those who have been inspired by the gift of the Spirit have a treasure that is precious indeed, but in vessels of clay.[449] There are three ways in particular in which it will be possible to accomplish this.

First through mental pictures or impressions[450] by which the preacher represents to himself, after careful thought, images of the subjects about which he proposes to speak. What we behold with our eyes moves us more powerfully than what we only hear; for who would not be disturbed more keenly, should he see a foe with burning eyes and drawn sword advance with a terrible roar and plunge his sword into the breast of a cringing suppliant, and saw the wounded man collapse and breathe out his soul with a great groan, than if he only heard that a man was cruelly slain?

I know that there is a quality of speech that the Greeks call *hypotyposis* or *enargia* and Cicero calls *evidentia*,[451] which puts a whole scene before the listener's mind in such a way that it seems that it is not being narrated but is going on before his eyes; but there is such a huge difference between the visions of those who are asleep and the perception of those who are awake that I ignore the fact that the very power of *evidentia* proceeds from a mental image. Nor is it necessary here for the preacher to invent what could have happened even if it did not, the way that courtroom advocates do; rather a closer and more attentive examination of Scripture will itself provide genuine examples in abundance. Yet while it is permissible in human narratives, for instance in recounting the sufferings of martyrs, to invent speeches suited to persons so long as it is done with discretion, so also it is not forbidden to add certain details that are likely to have attended the event itself.

* * * * *

448 'Effectiveness' (*energia*): 'ἐνέργεια, or vigour ... derives its name from action and finds its peculiar function in securing that nothing that we say is tame' (Quintilian 8.3.60, 89; see also 4.2.63).

449 Cf 2 Cor 4:7.

450 Quintilian (6.2.29) gives 'mental pictures or impressions' (φαντασίαι or *visiones*) as ways of generating emotions 'in ourselves, since emotion is not in our own power.' These experiences 'seem actually to be before our very eyes.'

451 For *hypotyposis* or *evidentia*, see Quintilian 9.2.40; cf 6.2.32, 8.3.61; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.55.68; and Cicero *De oratore* 3.53.202 and *Orator* 40.139. See Erasmus' discussion of this 843–5 below.

Chrysostom is a remarkable artist in both. Scripture, after all, is like a fine painting: the longer you examine it, the more you see to admire. Someone who brings artistic and practised eyes to it will see very different things from what some untrained person would see in studying it carelessly. Accordingly, when the preacher has surveyed the individual parts with careful reflection, he will both be more moved himself and will inflame others more powerfully. 'Before whose eyes Christ was crucified,'[452] says Paul; and yet the Galatians had never seen Christ on the cross, but he had been represented to their minds by Paul's vivid preaching as though they had seen what they heard. Similarly Chrysostom, by describing all the accompanying circumstances, magnifies the hospitality of Abraham,[453] the gentleness of David towards Saul,[454] and just about everything that he treats; yet that is not adding our own imaginings of Scripture but unrolling Scripture itself like a fine tapestry and laying it open to view.

A little more leeway is granted to those who tell human stories. For example, Basil does not think it sufficient to relate that the forty martyrs were killed by cold but lays before the eyes what happens to such as die from the cold,[455] and he does not pass over anything that contributes to either *evidentia* or amplification. They were soldiers, and they were young men; here the nature of the person immediately renders the ardour of their faith more admirable. And they were not all from a single region but recruited from different places, as happens in conscriptions, and their impressive agreement in the profession of Christianity was therefore the more remarkable. The fact that they were not two or three but forty in number, with one voice and a single mind, works in the same direction. They were outstanding in warfare, and their courage had won them the highest honours from the emperor. And they were not dragged to make their profession but willingly professed that they were Christians; and one did not speak for all as in a conspiracy, but each professed his own name, and this when they saw the fires, the swords, the crosses, the pits, the wheels, the whips made ready in accordance with the emperor's terrible edict. Many had been frightened by these and fled, which is a form of denying; some persisted in their profession. A fair number entered the contest and, since they were unequal to enduring the torments, lost their crown and were shipwrecked though al-

* * * * *

452 Gal 3:1

453 John Chrysostom *Homilia 41 in Genesim* PG 53 (1862) 374–86; for this see *Homily 41* in *Homilies on Genesis 18–45* FOC 82 400–17; cf Gen 18:1–8.

454 *De Davide et Saule* 1.1–2 PG 54 (1862) 675–9 and *De Davide et Saule* 2 PG 54 687–95; see 1 Sam 24 and 26.

455 Basil of Caesarea *Homilia 19. In sanctos quadraginta martyres* PG 31 (1857) 507–26

ready near to port. None of this frightened off these excellent young men, and indeed they could not be influenced either by the prefect's wheedling words or by his splendid promises. The prefect's rejected kindness, as happens, turned to rage. He devised a monstrous kind of death. It was a region naturally cold and exposed at that time to the north wind, rough as well with cliffs and crags. A night was chosen when the north wind was raging at its height. Among the cliffs there was a lake in the midst of the city so hardened by the cold that it was just as safe to walk upon the ice as upon the ground and even to drive horses and wagons. The soldiers were commanded to descend into that lake and to stay there all night, naked under the sky. Nothing is more terrible than this punishment. For the body, as it freezes into stiffness, first becomes all blue, presumably from the thickening of the blood, then is corrupted and grows warm again, with chattering of the teeth and rupturing of the blood vessels, until the body's whole mass contracts involuntarily, and from this a sharp pain and unspeakable torment, penetrating to the marrow, creates a sensation in those stiffened in the cold that can scarcely be endured. After this it strained the body to the utmost as the extremities burned as if by fire. For the burning pain, driven from the body's extremities and taking refuge completely in its inmost parts, just as it leaves dead those parts from which it has departed, so it painfully affects those to which it goes, death gradually coming from rigour. Not only does he place these things before our eyes, but he assigns appropriate language to each of the speakers: what the prefect said to coax what response the martyrs gave to his coaxing, what response they gave to his threats, the words with which they encouraged each other as they entered the lake, the prayers for deliverance they made in the torment itself. But, not to make a nuisance of myself by repeating each point, that most eloquent man so amplifies and depicts everything that you see more in his account than if you had watched it in person. But he first pictured this pathetic sight in his own mind and moved himself deeply before he aroused compassion in others.

Likewise Chrysostom in the case of Babylas:[456] with what *evidentia* he depicts the emperor, cruel and powerful, entering with his entourage in great pomp, the bishop armed only with the Word going to meet him with fearless gaze, laying his hand on the tyrant's chest, enjoining the wicked man to withdraw from the sanctuary. These are enough by way of example.

* * * * *

456 John Chrysostom *De s. Babyla contra Iulianum et gentiles* PG 50 (1862) 533–72; similar *evidentia* is also found in Chrysostom's other homily on Babylas, *De s. hieromartyre Babyla* PG 50 (1862) 527–34; for this see *On the Holy Martyr, S. Babylas* NPNF 1st series 9 141–3.

Moreover, some are more inclined by nature, others more adept through practice at creating pictures in the mind, just as some painters produce in colour a likeness of a face that they have seen only once if they have examined it very carefully because they carry in their mind a complete image of the face. Just so, one man is more perceptive than another or also more practised in observing Scripture, for we hear that some are so exercised in the contemplation of things like Christ sweating in the garden[457] or stretched upon the cross that they claim that they suffer the sorts of things that he suffered; some also assert that the power of imagination is so great that things pass even into the body itself, for example, traces of the Lord's wounds on the hands, feet, and breast.[458] But this natural emotion becomes a vice in some, for some begin to vomit immediately at the sight of another's vomit or are seized by epilepsy themselves on hearing the voice of epileptics. Even the mention of filthiness or of terrible illness or of surgery is so offensive to some that they are gravely affected. This weakness does not suit a preacher, just as it also does not suit a physician, for someone who is immediately seized by illness is not suitable for healing, nor is someone fit for speaking whose voice is interrupted by sobs, whose face is twisted by uncontrollable weeping. Just as Paul says that 'the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets,'[459] so emotions should be under the speaker's control so that he knows how to check his welling tears and control excessive emotionalism for the time being. These then are two ways in which a temporary mental ardour is stirred.

The third is that, if the speaker, when he is about to speak, feels rather listless, he should read a passage of Scripture especially suitable for setting the mind on fire, dwell upon it until he feels his mind warming, and climb up into the pulpit before that warmth cools.

The fourth,[460] in my own opinion the most effective of all, is for the

* * * * *

457 See Luke 22:44.

458 The best known account of this is Thomas of Celano's *Life of Saint Francis* 'The Vision of a Man Having the Image of a Crucified Seraph' 2.3 in *Francis of Assisi* I 263–5. The episode was depicted by Giotto and other artists.

459 1 Cor 14:32. See *Paraphrasis in 1 ad Corinthios* CWE 43. See also *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* 14.32 ASD VI-9 282: '"Spirits of the prophets." πνεύματα. The word is plural in Greek, [E] as Hieronymus mentions in the prologue to Isaiah: "The spirits of the prophets are in the prophets' control." [A] Let us not think this saying is about the Holy Spirit himself, but rather about the gift of the Spirit which has been given to those individuals to whom it happens that it is in their power to use or not, which is not permitted those who are inspired or mad.' See Jerome *Commentarii in Esaiam* CCSL 73 2 60–1.

460 Erasmus gives a fourth method for 'rousing good emotions,' although above he had stated there were three. See introductory note (*Ecclesiastes*) CWE 67 188 and n555.

preacher to devote himself to deep prayer just before the hour of his sermon and to ask for wisdom and eloquence and for the success of his sermon from him who makes the tongues of infants eloquent.[461] It is incredible how much light, how much power, how much strength and zeal come from this source to the preacher, and indeed to all men, to enable them to accomplish a difficult task. Those who have first spoken with God with all their mind will speak more skillfully with men, and nothing else is more powerful in dispelling human shyness or anxiety, emotions that frequently impede a speaker. But if there is no opportunity for this, let him at least utter quick prayers to God while he is mounting the pulpit, while he is composing himself, and let the entreaty that is customarily made in the pulpit come from the heart rather than from custom and be made in short but ardent prayers. But let the devout preacher not be attracted by the ostentation of those who, in order to be thought clever, rush to the pulpit straight from chatting and joking with the laity or from a drunken banquet, using this pretence of improvisation to win glory; the good preacher's sole pursuit, sole glory is to have felt that the Holy Spirit has set the people on fire with a love of godliness through himself as the instrument.

Secular rhetoricians have also wisely perceived that one should not dwell too long on those violent emotions that shake a person completely but should descend from them gradually to more moderate ones, just as one ought not to rush into them suddenly; for nature does not allow anything that is exceptional to continue for long.[462] It is not even expedient to stir up the feelings of one's hearers frequently and immoderately, for, just as the body is hardened by constant blows, as happens to slaves, so the mind may be hardened from excessively frequent and bitter displays of emotionalism. What I began to say earlier must be repeated, that it is not for the good preacher to stir emotions in just any way, not with gross facial distortion, not with buffoonish physical gestures, but rather with words and not so much with words as with facts, for some facts are such that they move emotions of themselves when simply and clearly told or even read.

Those who saw him say that it was the habit of Girolamo Savonarola[463] to grow so hot sometimes against the crimes of his congregation that he

* * * * *

461 For 'tongues of infants,' cf Wisd of Sol 10:21.

462 This is certainly behind Augustine's discussion of the three styles of speaking (*genera dicendi*) – *genus subtile, genus medium, genus grande* – and advice on mixing them; see book 4 of *De doctrina christiana*. See also Cicero *De inventione* 1.56.109: 'But when the emotions have been aroused it will be advisable not to linger over the *conquestio* [lament or complaint]. For as the rhetorician Apollonius said, "Nothing dries more quickly than tears" '; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 2.31.50; Quintilian 6.2.7–20; and Lausberg §1079.

463 See n43 above.

would suddenly dash off the pulpit and go home, with his sermon unfinished and the congregation left in suspense. I do not know how becoming this was for him, but I do not think that it should be seized upon as a model.

A story that they tell about Roberto Caracciolo of Lecce is more shameless.[464] He was using the great forcefulness of his oratory to urge princes and people against the Turks and other enemies of the Christian name,[465] and when his address had boiled up to its highest pitch, he began to deplore the fact that none offered themselves as leaders for such a pious task and said, 'If that is an obstacle, look at me: I shall not be afraid to cast off this habit of Francis and show myself to you a soldier or a general.' And as he said this, he cast off his outer garment; underneath he was a soldier for all to see, with a long military cloak made of linen,[466] and he was girt with a gigantic sword. In this outfit he preached for half an hour looking like a general. Asked by the cardinals with whom he had a familiar relationship what sort of precedent was this, he replied that he had done it to please a girlfriend, who had confessed to him intimately that there was nothing in Robert that she disliked except his religious habit. Then he said, 'How could I dress to have you like me completely?' 'Like a soldier,' she said. 'So make sure you attend my sermon tomorrow.'

He is said to have used something similarly unconventional to criticize the cardinals and the pope for their pomp and luxury. He was going to speak before them; when he saw them entering with more than regal fanfare and the pope being borne at the rear on his *sedia gestatoria* and being adored by everyone, when they finally sat down and were waiting for the man to speak, without a word of preface he kept spitting out, 'Fie, St Peter; fie, St Paul,' directing his voice in a tone of execration now to the left and now to the right. Then without another word he dashed from their midst, leaving everyone aghast, some suspecting that he had gone mad, others wondering whether he had burst into those blasphemies because he had slipped into some heresy or Judaism or paganism. And while they discussed throwing the man in chains, one cardinal, who had a fairly close knowledge of his character and even liked him, convinced them to have him called before the pope first and given a hearing with a few cardinals as witness. When asked how he had burst into such horrible blasphemies, he replied that he had had quite a different theme ready and briefly expounded the essence of his

* * * * *

464 See book 2 496 and nn143, 442 above.

465 For Erasmus' views on the Christian crusades and crusading in general, see *De bello Turcico* CWE 64 201–66.

466 'Military cloak' (*sagum*); the *sagum* was a long military cloak usually made of wool.

address. 'But when I saw that you lived with such fanfare and in such luxury,' he said, 'and reflected at the same time what a humble, laborious, and unpleasant life was lived by the apostles, whose place you take, I concluded that either they were demented for taking such a thorny path to heaven or else you are going straight to hell. But I could not bring myself to suspect any evil of you, who hold the keys of the heavenly kingdom; all that was left was to curse the folly of those who, when they could have lived splendidly and pleasantly in your way, preferred to be tormented all their life by fasts, vigils, and toils.'

When Marc Antony had praised Julius Caesar before the people in his funeral oration and had exalted his glorious deeds as far as he could in words, he showed Caesar's cloak, punctured by many wounds and stained with much blood, saying, 'Behold how cruelly the conspirators killed such a man.'[467] The crowd listened to his oration calmly, but when they saw the cloak, such an uproar arose that the conspirators who were present had to flee to escape being torn to pieces.

But it is not appropriate for a preacher to use such methods to stir a crowd's emotions, because such a move often becomes ridiculous. For example, the person who had spoken at length about the madness of those who serve Satan suddenly displayed a man disguised as the devil, with fiery eyes, hooked nose, boar's tusks, an eye on his chest, curving nails, a frightening hook, bellowing loudly. 'Such,' he said, 'is the master to whom you have betrayed yourselves into slavery by despising Christ.' Many were terrified, but soon their fear turned to mockery. People marvel at novelty and are moved more easily by outward appearance than by examples of true piety or by sound teaching, and the mighty are not very different in this regard from ordinary people. Some unduly exploit this flaw in human nature, more for their own glory than for the salvation of the many, for whatever displays a foreign and affected novelty should be suspect, especially since no example of this sort was offered us by Christ and the apostles.

I have seen some who covered their face with a hood as they went through the congregation to the pulpit, as though a pious man could not have his face and eyes composed if they were not covered on both sides, the way that drivers put blinders on their more skittish horses so that they see nothing except the road in front. When about to pray, they would prostrate themselves on the pulpit in such a way that they produced a loud crack from the impact of their knees.

* * * * *

467 This account of Antony's eulogy for Caesar appears in Plutarch *Antony* 14, although Plutarch does not give this direct quotation; it is rather Erasmus' rendering of Plutarch's passage.

I have heard of another who covered his head completely with his cloak as he approached the pulpit and disliked anything that he had in common with others. He did not deign to speak in churches but under the sky, and he gave no one private access to himself, even if he was summoned by princes. He used to lie on the ground, and his food was no different (namely bread and water),[468] his body worn out by hunger, more like a corpse than a living man; he spoke through an interpreter and kept terrifying the crowd with strange gestures and shouts, sometimes putting his neck in a noose and imitating a choking man with his bulging eyes: then he would suddenly bare his chest and pound it with his fist, shouting, '*Misericordia, misericordia, misericordia*' – for he was an Italian. They used to flock to such an unusual spectacle even from a distance, not from love of piety but from a search for novelty. His denunciations of dice, of cards, of drums and plumes were quite fierce; these were burned in a fire. He plucked a feather from the hat of a courtier who was standing near the pulpit, tore it to pieces, and scattered it into the crowd while giving a frightening denunciation of pride.

Someone who imitated him all too well, after energetically attacking the crimes with which men were crucifying Christ again, used to bring out a crucifix, but with little sacs attached, which he could touch and make blood burst out and besprinkle the crowd.

With these and similar gestures – not to say fakeries – emotions are indeed stirred in simple folk, but generally they are temporary.

I was closely acquainted with someone of the same order[469] who did not walk barefoot and did not lie upon the ground and did not live on bread and water and did not deny anyone access to himself, available to everyone equally, the great and the humble, the good and the bad, seeking profit for Christ[470] everywhere: in short, he had nothing exceptional in his outward state. Yet with his teaching, which was evangelical rather than loud, and

* * * * *

468 Erasmus seems to mean that his diet was no different from his sleeping arrangements.

469 Chomarat (ASD V-5 97 879n) believes that this 'someone of the same order' is Jean Vitrier (c 1456–before 15 June 1521). See especially Godin *Spiritualité*; CEBR III 408–9. Notably, this is the only instance in the *Ecclesiastes* where Erasmus commends a Franciscan preacher. For Erasmus' profile of Jean Vitrier, see Ep 1211:1–273. Vitrier's name appears in the index of the third edition of *Ecclesiastes*, published by H. Froben and N. Episcopius, August 1536; this would confirm Erasmus' attribution of these words to Vitrier; see Godin *Spiritualité* 46 n141.

470 Cf 1 Cor 9:19–22.

with a character pure of every vice, he drew countless men and countless women towards true scorn for the world.

At this point if someone should offer the excuse here that some persons are so insensitive that there is no other means of moving them, I reply that it is one thing to teach the people, quite another to mock them, and there are no people so thickheaded that assiduous teaching is not successful.

Akin to this is the practice that some have of stirring emotions through pictures or by showing the relics of saints; neither of these is in keeping with the dignity of the place in which the preacher stands, for we do not read of anything like this being done either by Christ or by the apostles. Pictures have considerable usefulness in other contexts, either as an aid to memory or for understanding things, for some things can hardly be fully understood unless illustrated in a picture, as, for example, in the description of clothing or places or trees, or for fixing in the mind the images of which we just spoke:[471] in this respect they will of course be useful also to those who are preparing to preach, but such is the gravity of the sermon that it is with reluctance that it admits of this kind. I think that the same view should be taken regarding relics of the saints; in both instances one must beware of falling into superstition, since the danger in both instances is equal.

I see that some have wrongly made use of certain little stories to rouse the emotions (most of them, I suspect, invented for this very purpose), of which there will perhaps be greater opportunity to speak later; and indeed I think that I have already given enough advice concerning the emotions, at least so far as pertains to the preacher.

It remains to point out which figures of speech[472] contribute to which kinds of rhetorical excellence. The most important qualities are probability, clarity, vividness, pleasantness, forcefulness, splendour, or sublimity.[473] But

* * * * *

471 See 735–8 above where Erasmus talks about the art of memory.

472 On 'figures of speech' (*schemata*), see Quintilian 9.1–45: 'In my last book I spoke of tropes, I now come to figures, called σχήματα in Greek . . .' Quintilian discusses the differences among rhetoricians in defining tropes and figures. Cf *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4 passim; Cicero *Orator* 39.134–40.139; *De oratore* 3.41.165–3.43.169, 3.52.199–3.54.207; and Quintilian 8.6 (tropes). In the following section Erasmus takes up the terminology of rhetoric. Because rendering the rhetorical terms in English may likely convey very little to the modern reader, and perhaps confuses rather than helps, the translator employs the Latin terms, since the text itself explains the meaning of the Latin word.

473 'Probability (*probabilitas*), clarity (*perspicuitas*), vividness (*evidentia*), pleasantness (*iucunditas*), forcefulness (*vehementia*) splendour (*splendor*), or sublimity (*sublimitas*)': Hermogenes in Περὶ ἰδεῶν λόγου (*On Types of Style*) identifies

since there is some disagreement among writers on rhetoric about the kinds and names of the figures, I shall avoid tormenting the reader here with this variety by generally employing the names used by the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (whether he was Cornificius or someone else),[474] though hardly anyone else has written more carelessly about the figures; and first we shall treat in no particular order the kindred things that contribute to the vigour and forcefulness of language, of which the Greeks call the former γοργότης [vigour], the latter δεινότης [forcefulness].[475]

The first three figures – *repetitio*,[476] through which the same expression is repeated in the beginning; *conversio*, through which one is repeated in the end; *complexio*, through which it is repeated in either part – make for vigour. An example of the first is 'When you shall stand naked before the Supreme Judge, where then will be your riches, where your luxuries, where your haughty retinue, where your armed attendants, where your splendid buildings, where your estates?' This of the second: 'It is Christ alone who created man, redeemed man, reconciled man to the Father, for man's sake put on man, taught man with the varied gifts of his Spirit, in short, alone blesses man.' An example of the third: 'What were you before God created you? Nothing. What were you before Christ redeemed you? Less than nothing. What would you be now, if he were to withdraw his grace

* * * * *

seven types of style ('ideal forms') of oratory: clarity (σαφήνεια), grandeur (μέγεθος), beauty (κάλλος), rapidity or power (γοργότης), character (ἦθος), sincerity (ἀλήθεια), and forcefulness (δεινότης). Though rhetorical terminology differs among the ancient authors, and translations of rhetorical terms from Greek to Latin often vary considerably, Erasmus seems here roughly to be following Hermogenes in his identification of these seven 'principal powers' of oratory. These terms are also discussed by Quintilian, Cicero, the author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and others.

474 Lorenzo Valla (1405–57) contested the authorship of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*; he was followed by Raffaele Regio in 1491; and in 1582 Pietro Vettori authoritatively proclaimed Cornificius as its author. It was, however, Quintilian who in many passages of the *Institutio oratoria* first suggested that Cornificius was the author; see Harry Caplan's introduction in [Cicero] *Ad C. Herennium* trans H. Caplan, Loeb Classical Library 403 (Cambridge, Mass and London 1989) vii–xliv; Caplan concludes, '[We] must assign the work to an *auctor incertus*' (xiv). In Erasmus' time, therefore, the debate continued; yet Erasmus takes no position on the question.

475 γοργότης (*gorgotês*) and δεινότης (*deinotês*) 'vigour and intensity' are two of the seven types of style ('ideal forms') treated by Hermogenes' Περὶ ἰδεῶν λόγου (*On Types of Style*). See n473 above.

476 See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.13.19; Quintilian 9.1.38; and Lausberg §§608–44.

from you? Nothing. What is there that contributes to true happiness that he has not generously provided? Nothing. What possession or power do you have of yourself? Nothing. What good then can you hope for from elsewhere? Nothing.' These three figures contribute considerably to the forcefulness of a speech, namely for rebuking, exhorting, and reproaching,[477] but they will fall flat if you apply them in a plain speech that involves no emotions.

Exclamation rouses the stronger emotions,[478] but only when applied in its place. For, as has been said, starting right off from an exclamation or raising the voice in some uninspired matter is the way that madmen behave; but when you have urged great matters, when you have already turned the minds of the audience, then will be the occasion for an exclamation, which however should be neither frequent nor of long duration. Paul shows skill when, after saying much about the unconquerable weakness of the flesh, he finally exclaims, 'Unhappy man that I am, who will free me from this body prey to death?'[479] And an exclamation does not occur only when you hear an 'oh,' nor is it enough for an exclamation as a figure of speech to bellow 'oh' as loud as you can, which is the sound made by asses; rather exclamation occurs whenever uncontrollable emotion breaks out. Sometimes it is inserted by way of parenthesis, for example, 'Alas, the revulsion and shame!' or 'Immortal God, how unsafe everything is everywhere in human affairs!' 'I shudder in recalling!'[480] 'Oh the times, oh the morals!'[481] and 'Wretched me!'[482] and 'Alas for the the hardness of the human heart!'[483] and 'You filth, you blot!'[484] Such is Virgil's phrase: 'What do you not compel mortal hearts to do, / Accursed love of gold!'[485] Moreover, the forcefulness is doubled if an apostrophe is added, as in the example I just cited. St Bernard, when

* * * * *

477 Cf 2 Tim 3:16, 4:2; 1 Tim 6:2; Titus 1:9.

478 See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.15.22; Quintilian 9.1.39, 9.2.26–7.

479 See Romans 7, especially 7:24. Here Erasmus uses his own translation of the Greek New Testament because the Vulgate's *de corpore mortis huius* is unclear; see LB VI 600A.

480 Virgil *Aeneid* 2.204

481 Cicero *In Catilinam* I 1.2. The expression is a favourite one of Cicero; see also eg *In Verrem* II 4.24.56.

482 A favourite exclamation of Plautus used passim; see eg *Aulularia* 409, 720.

483 Cf Mark 10:5, 16:14; Matt 19:8; Rom 2:5.

484 Cf Cicero *In Pisonem* 26.62: 'O darkened eyes! O bemired and dingy soul!' (*O tenebrae, lutum, sordes* . . .). See also Catullus 42.13: 'O the tart, the trollop' (*O lutum, lupanar*).

485 Virgil *Aeneid* 3.56; cited by Quintilian 9.2.10.

he had interpreted the ass that the Lord mounted as our untamed flesh that fights against the Spirit, exclaimed, not unskilfully, 'Mount and seat yourself upon this ass of ours, Lord Jesus!'[486]

The seasonable *interrogatio* [application of a question],[487] too, when employed at an appropriate moment, lends much vigour and bite to a speech. It is applied appropriately in a case that is either clear-cut or already won; hence it particularly suits epilogues, though it makes a speech more vivid in the other parts as well, for the same sentiment has more vigour when uttered through a question than when simply stated. For example this, from Ovid's *Medea*, 'I was able to save him: do you ask whether I am able to destroy him?'[488] is more fiery than if she had said, 'If I was able to save, I shall be able to destroy as well'; likewise Cicero's phrase against Catiline, 'How long, finally, will you abuse our patience,'[489] etc, for that whole passage is ablaze with *interrogatio*.

But not every question is a figure of speech, and so some distinguish these words so that a question is raised by someone who wishes to learn and expects an answer, a rhetorical question by someone who is pressing a point to which an answer cannot be given.[490] An example of this figure cannot be given appropriately because it depends upon what precedes. For example, someone who had emphasized mankind's persistent wickedness against a God who invites towards repentance will appropriately add, 'What is ingratitude if this is not it?,' 'Is that not the ultimate mental blindness?,' and 'Is that scorning God or not? Is this denying God or not?' Moreover, this figure serves a variety of emotions: asseveration, compassion, urgency, indignation, wonder, self-doubt; Quintilian lists these in detail,[491] so that it is not worthwhile to repeat them here. The last mentioned [ie self-doubt]

* * * * *

486 See Bernard of Clairvaux *Sermo 4, De diversis ascensionibus*, *Sermones in ascensione Domini* in *Bernardi opera* ed J. Leclercq, C.H. Talbot, and H.M. Rochais (Rome 1968) V 147. Erasmus is likely recalling this from memory. Bernard's words read: 'Ascende, Domine, super asinum istum, conculca bestiales hos motus, quia domari debent, ne dominari praevaleant.'

487 For *interrogatio*, see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.15.22; Quintilian 9.2.6–13, 9.3.98.

488 Ovid's *Medea* is not extant, but Quintilian quotes from the drama; see Quintilian 8.5.6.

489 *In Catilinam* I 1.1

490 See Quintilian 9.2.6–16.

491 Quintilian 6.2 passim. Chomarat (ASD V-5 103 964–5n) correctly points out that 'asseveration' is not an emotion (*affectus*). For 'asseveration' (or 'corroboration') see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.3.4 and Cicero *De inventione* 1.24.34 ('confirmation or proof'); Quintilian treats the other emotions – 'compassion' (9.2.9); 'urgency' (9.2.7); 'indignation' (9.2.10); 'wonder' (9.2.10); and 'self-doubt' (cf 9.2.19).

comes from tragedy, although Jerome imitates it several times: 'What, my soul, are we doing?'[492]

Sometimes an answer also constitutes a figure when the reply is other than expected.[493] For example, a witness, when asked in the prosecution of an accused whether he had been beaten by him with cudgels, answered, 'Even though innocent'; he used the figure of response to increase the charge. Another, when asked whether he had not killed a man, deflected the charge by replying, 'A bandit.' The same elegance can be preserved even when we are replying to ourselves. In the Gospel it serves indignation and weariness: 'Oh unbelieving and hard-hearted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I endure you?'[494]

A succession of clauses [*membra*] and single words [*articuli*][495] lends vigour to a speech because they strike the mind as though with repeated blows, but the difference is that individual clauses complete a grammatical unit in few words but not a sense unit; an *articulus* does the same thing

* * * * *

492 See Jerome Ep 108.28 NPNF 2nd series 6 210: 'What ails thee, my soul?' (*Quid agimus, anime?*); see also Pseudo-Quintilian *Declamationes maiores, Declamatio* 19 (8).

493 See Quintilian 9.2.12.

494 Matt 17:16

495 Both words *membrum* and *articulus* are attested in English usage, identifying smaller units of a sentence or clauses (cf 'article of faith'). 'Member' and 'article' in English, however, do not correspond precisely to *membrum* and *articulus* in Latin. *Membrum* and *articulus* are standard terms in Latin to describe parts of a sentence: *membrum* (Greek κῶλον) is a clause or member of a period, and *articulus* is a single word. However, what Erasmus is discussing here is a string of single words or phrases joined in asyndeton as given in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.19.26: 'Colon or clause [*membrum*] is the name given to a sentence member, brief and complete, which does not express the entire thought, but is in turn supplemented by another colon, as follows: "On the one hand you were helping your enemy." That is one so-called colon; it ought then to be supplemented by a second: "And on the other you were hurting your friend." This figure can consist of two cola, but it is neatest and most complete when composed of three, as follows: "You were helping your enemy, you were hurting your friend, and you were not consulting your own best interests." Again: You have not consulted the welfare of the republic, nor have you helped your friends, nor have you resisted your enemies." It is called a Comma or Phrase [*articulus*] when single words are set apart by pauses in staccato speech, as follows: "By your vigour, voice, looks you have terrified your adversaries."' See also Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.7.11 and 13. The translation here goes somewhat beyond what the text actually says but should make Erasmus' meaning clear. (A. Dalzell)

more sharply with individual words separated by a short little breath.[496] An example of the former will be 'See how much unhappiness you have inflicted upon yourself in a single crime. You have squandered your inheritance, plunged your parents into mourning, alienated your friends, stained your reputation, provoked God to anger,' this of the latter: 'You have lost property, reputation, parents, friends, God.' Neither a single *membrum* nor a single *articulus* constitutes a figure of speech. The most admired are those that are composed of three,[497] though nothing forbids using two as well, or more. In clauses the elegance of the figure is lost if they are too long; they are commended by their rhythm and by their brevity. In both of them, disjunction – which the Greeks call ἀσύνδετον [*asyndeton*] – adds elegance by the omission of a conjunction,[498] for then they seem to burst forth with anger, as is clear in the examples I have cited; if you add a conjunction to them, the language will be weaker: 'You have squandered your inheritance, and plunged your parents into mourning,' etc. But the language will be more emphatic if you add a conjunction to the first phrase or article also: 'And you have both squandered your inheritance and cast your parents into mourning,' etc, likewise, 'And property and reputation and parents,' etc. In both one must ensure that the language increases by steps, obviously so that what is most impressive is in last place; if this does not happen, there will be a congeries, of which we spoke on amplifications,[499] for that creates momentum by accumulation rather than by increment.

Equality of the parts – the Greeks call it πάρισον [equally balanced], the Romans *compar* [matching][500] – adds elegance to members, but this should be assessed not with the fingers but by how it sounds to the ears, for counting syllables is foolish since a smaller number is often equivalent to a larger if the syllables are long. And yet this type of rhythm has crept all too far into the rites of the church, as has the use of similar cadences and similar endings, which will be discussed in their place.[501]

We have *subiectio*[502] when we present to ourselves an objection that could have been made by our listeners, and we reply as if the objection had been made, or we challenge our opponents to answer and refute them as if

* * * * *

496 See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.19.26.
497 See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.19.26.
498 'Asyndeton,' a lack of connectives. (Translator's note) See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.30.41; Quintilian 9.3.50–4, 9.4.23.
499 See 788–9 above.
500 See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.20.27. *Compar* 'matching or isocolon' is not taken up by Quintilian.
501 See 850–2 below; see also *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.20.28.
502 For 'subjection' (*hypophora*), see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.23.33.

they have responded, or when we offer various proposals and refute each one as in a debate.

This will be an example of the first sort: 'Someone might say here, "I know what objection they are going to raise here"; I am not unaware what will occur to many here.' Then let him append and refute them.

It becomes more heated when we challenge our opponents in accordance with the second method. For example, 'Now I call upon you, Jews. What have you relied upon to persist in your insanity? The oracles of the prophets? We have shown that they are all on our side. Moses? It has been shown that he was writing precisely about our Christ. Types and figures? It has been proved that they all fit Christ to a tee.[503] Miracles? Nobody could wish for greater ones. The number of those who feel as you do? You are a few whispering in corners; the whole world worships Christ. Does the outcome nourish you with the milk of hope? You see your temple already long since overturned, your sacrifices abolished, your city scattered, your people dispersed and outcast, and the only protection that has allowed them to survive is the mercy of Christians. What is left then but for you to come to your senses and embrace the true Messiah together with us?'

The third method will be this: 'Tell me, please: what does a worshipper of the world have in which to swell with pride and in which to fix his hope? In riches? They make no one great or happy; so far are they from accompanying a man in death that they often abandon him while he lives. In children? Possession is more uncertain than wealth itself. In his wife, household, and other advantages? Nothing in these is either permanent or such as to give a man peace of mind. Will he flee to God? He has made him angry. To his own mind? He will find there a torturing conscience.'

The first method suits argumentation, the second (which we too have used in our little declamation *Declamatio de morte*)[504] the epilogue. Both suit *inductio* [personification].[505] The third is appropriate for deliberation.

Moreover, this figure has a certain affinity with *interrogatio*, which was discussed a little while ago,[506] with *sermocinatio*, of which we are going to

* * * * *

503 For 'to a tee' (*ad unguem*), see *Adagia* I v 91 *Ad unguem* 'To the finger-nail.'

504 Erasmus refers to his *Declamatio de morte* published by Froben in December 1517 (LB IV). See this as 'A Second Example of Consolation,' in CWE 25 156–64; ASD I-2 441–55.

505 Chomarat explains *inductio* as 'personification' ASD V-5 105 28n. See Cicero *De oratore* 3.53.205: *personarum ficta inductio*. Chomarat notes that this sense of *inductio* differs from that of the dialecticians; cf Quintilian 5.10.73, 5.11.2; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.53.66, where it is called *conformatio*. See also 840–2 below.

506 For 'interrogation,' see 756–7, 818 above.

speak,[507] with *occupatio*,[508] and with *dubitatio*.[509] It benefits expression in a variety of ways. It contributes to clarity, to forcefulness or gravity, and to the ability to learn, for it is a kind of *subiectio* whereby we ask a question of ourselves and promptly reply to it, thereby making our listener attentive and disposed to learn so that he follows our words in his mind. Thus Paul at Galatians 3, 'What then is the Law? It was established on account of transgressions,'[510] and at Romans 3, 'Where is your boasting? It has been shut out. Through what law? Of deeds? No, but through the law of faith.'[511] But this figure is so common in Paul that there are examples everywhere. Yet the Lord too used it several times in the gospel, for example at Luke 7, 'What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft garments,'[512] etc, and shortly after in the same chapter, 'But to what shall I liken the men of this generation? Or what are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace,'[513] etc, likewise at Matthew 12, 'Who is my mother, and who are my brothers,'[514] etc.

Correctio,[515] which changes a word or statement into something more apt or more meaningful, increases the forcefulness of language. We reported an example of this figure from Cicero among the types of amplification.[516] Terence, in the character of Menedemus, says elegantly, 'A single son, quite young, do I have. / Ah, why did I say I have? No, Chremes – I had.'[517] Likewise, 'Christ redeemed us without charge, or rather not without charge

* * * * *

507 For 'sermocination,' see 842, 852, 860–1 below.

508 For *occupatio* 'occupation,' cf *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.27.37. Chomarat (ASD V-5 107 31n) points out the error in the edition of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* that Erasmus used, which read *occupatio*. The emended text reads *occultatio*, literally 'hiding' or 'concealment'; other technical terms for this are *paralipsis*, *antiphasis*, and *praeteritio*: 'when we say that we are passng by, or do not know, or refuse to say that which precisely now we are saying . . .' (4.27.37). See also 559 n478.

509 For *dubitatio* 'hesitation' or 'indecision,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.29.40: 'when the speaker seems to ask which of two or more words he had better use . . .'

510 Gal 3:19

511 Rom 3:27

512 Luke 7:24–5

513 Luke 7:31–2

514 Matt 12:48

515 For *correctio* 'correction,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.26.36; and Cicero *De oratore* 3.53.203.

516 See 775.

517 Terence *Heautontimorumenos* 93–4

but at the cost of his own precious blood.[518] By spending his life for his friends he has shown us the highest love, or rather more than the highest, by facing death for his enemies.' Likewise, 'Sin is a disease of the mind or, to put it better, a death of the soul.'[519] Likewise, 'What is a man's whole life but a handful of time? What I have said is too much. What is it but a point of time? And this too is too much. This life is nothing and less than nothing if compared to eternity.' Sometimes correction is done without a change of word; for example, 'The man turned white, if it is appropriate to call someone a man who has the mind of a beast.'

Akin to this is *occupatio*, which says in passing what it says it does not want to say.[520] This figure too belongs to the kind of amplification that is made through comparison, for if the things that we say we do not want to mention in order to arrive more quickly at something more important are significant in themselves, that thing in comparison with which we are neglecting them increases in significance. For example, 'I shall not mention here how brief this life is, how uncertain, prey to how many evils, exposed to how many dangers; even without any of these, what is it but a dream if compared to that heavenly life?' Again, 'It does not befit my modesty to stir up a Lerna of secret crimes;[521] I shall allow their private filth to lie hidden in darkness; it is enough that they themselves are aware of it; I shall speak only of the obvious things that everyone knows and of which they themselves all but boast.' Likewise, 'I am ashamed to say what those people are not ashamed to do.' Let me come to lighter examples: 'There has come to us a feeder of the flock: I had almost said a feeder upon the flock,' 'These are the edicts of a king: for I should not wish to say "tyrant",' 'His version of Aristotle, not to say perversion.'

Conduplicatio,[522] in which one word or several words are repeated, has no place except when the speech reaches its pitch; the battology[523] would

* * * * *

518 Cf 1 Pet 1:19.

519 Cf Rom 5:12.

520 For *occupatio*, see n508.

521 'A Lerna of secret crimes'; according to Strabo 'Lake Lernê [Lerna], the scene of the story of the Hydra, lies in Argeia and the Mycenaean territory; and on account of the cleansings that take place in it there arose a proverb, "A Lernê of ills" ' (*The Geography of Strabo* 8.6.8). See *Adagia* I iii 27 *Lerna malorum* 'A Lerna of troubles'; *Adagia* IV i 413; and *Moria* CWE 27 114 ('the entire Lernean morass').

522 For *conduplicatio* 'conduplication' or 'reduplication,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.28.38.

523 By (*battologia*) 'battology' Erasmus means the repetition of a word or a phrase. Chomarat notes that Erasmus does not always give the same origin for this Greek word; see ASD V-5 109 75n.

fall flat elsewhere. Moreover, nothing is more common than saying the same thing twice in grief or asseveration or a similar emotion; hence Ovid's phrase, 'You will say twice that everything of mine was true,'[524] and Virgil called 'Three times and four times blessed'[525] those that he wished to be understood as outstandingly blessed. There is *conduplicatio* of a word in Homer Ἄρες ἄρες βροτολοιγέ [Ares, Ares, you bane of mortals],[526] of several in Terence's *Phormio*:[527] 'Oh, immortal god, / Does Demipho deny that this Phanium is related to him? / Does Demipho deny that this woman is related?' Likewise, 'Polluted by your parricidal hatred of your brother, do you dare call God "Father"? Do you, I say, dare call God "Father," polluted by your hatred of your brother?'

There is a very slight difference between this figure and *interpretatio*,[528] the only distinction being that in the latter the same sentiment is repeated with a change of words. This is employed very frequently in the prophetic writings, where the sense is quite often descanted in other words, for instance, 'The just man will flourish like a palm, like the cedars of Lebanon he will be multiplied.'[529] This is done even in the case of a single word, as in Cicero (about Catiline) 'He departed, withdrew, escaped, evaded,'[530] or in several, for example, 'Are you not ashamed of your obvious untruthfulness? Do you not blush to lie openly?'

Simple *permissio*[531] is not a figure of speech, but it becomes one whenever it contains a reproach or irony or asseveration or self-confidence. For example, when the young men say in *Adelphi*, 'No, father, it is we who permit you,' etc,[532] their language does not involve a figure, but there is a figure whenever we make an ironic concession to an adversary.[533] For example, in a case involving a man's free status, someone said of him, though he himself had an ugly face, 'He does not even have the face of a free man,' and

* * * * *

524 Ovid *Ex Ponto* 2.1.68 (to Germanicus Caesar)
525 Virgil *Aeneid* 1.94
526 Homer *Iliad* 5.31, 455
527 Terence *Phormio* 351–3
528 For *interpretatio* 'interpretation, or synonymy,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.28.38.
529 Ps 92:12 (Vulg 91:13)
530 Cicero *In Catilinam* II 1.1. Erasmus has changed the word order slighty by reversing 'escaped' (*erupit*) and 'evaded' (*evasit*).
531 For *permissio* 'permission,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.29.39 and Quintilian 9.2.25.
532 Terence *Adelphi* 995. Erasmus changes the Latin phrase slightly.
533 For 'concession,' see Quintilian 9.2.25.

his advocate replied, 'You have spoken sincerely: a man who does not have a fair face is not free.'[534] Calvus' remark against Vatinius contains asseveration: 'Abandon all shame, and say that you are more worthy than Cato to become praetor.'[535] The reply that the apostle Peter gave to the council that warned him not to speak subsequently about Jesus contains self-confidence: 'Judge for yourselves whether one should obey men rather than God,'[536] for someone who is not afraid to concede judgment to his adversary has a mighty confidence in his case. Such is the passage at Isaiah 1, 'Come and accuse me, says the Lord,'[537] and the Lord in the Gospel, 'Who of you will accuse me of sin?'[538] Admittedly it is not a figure; however, *permissio* is very effective where a man surrenders himself entirely to the judgment of divinity, like David when cast out: 'If I do not please, he is Lord; let him do what is good in his eyes.'[539] The same thing sometimes has substantial influence also before a human judge to incline him either towards benevolence or towards mercy if we show that we have placed all our assurance in his fairness.

Dubitatio [uncertainty] – not genuine, but feigned – also contributes to emotion, as in 'Shall I speak or be silent?'[540] likewise Virgil's 'Is the mother more cruel, or that wicked boy?'[541] again Terence's 'Where to look, where to search, whom to ask, what path to take / I am unsure,'[542] likewise, 'Where am I to turn?'[543] 'On whom am I to call?' 'From where am I to seek assistance?' likewise, 'The abundance of material makes me wonder where to begin, what to say first or last,' 'I have not yet decided whether I ought to congratulate him on his rescue from this evil world or bewail our own fate for losing such a light of the church,' 'I am unsure what I ought to marvel at most in this man, his wickedness or his shamelessness or his derangement,'

* * * * *

534 In the original anecdote (taken from Quintilian 6.3.32), the advocate's words (with *qui malam faciem habet* rather than *qui non habet bonam faciem*) are phrased as a question, but Erasmus' context requires a statement. (Translator's note)
535 *Adagia* I viii 47. Quintilian quotes this; see 9.2.25. See also *Adagia* II ii 94.
536 Acts 5:29 and 4:19. Erasmus conflates these two passages from Acts to produce Peter (and John's) response to the council.
537 Isa 1:18
538 John 8:46
539 2 Sam 15:26
540 Virgil *Aeneid* 3.39
541 Virgil *Eclogues* 8.49
542 Terence *Eunuchus* 293–4
543 'Where am I to turn?' (*Quo me vertam?*) is a common expression used by Cicero; see eg *In Verrem* II 5.2.

'Right at the beginning of my speech I do not know by what name to address you – fellow soldiers or enemies,'[544] 'At which should we be indignant, at those who have driven you to this crime, or at you, who preferred to obey the counsels of such wicked men rather than the advice of good men?'

Closely related to this is the figure that some call *communicatio* [consultation],[545] in which we deliberate as though with a judge or adversary what must be done or what ought to have been done (for it applies either way): 'If the same fate befell you, come now, what would you do?'[546] 'In this most turbulent state of affairs, give me advice: what do you think I should do?' 'I appeal to you, pitiless one, whom now no vengeance satisfies – how easily you forgive yourself, how easily you extenuate your sin when your own sins are equal or even more vicious,' 'I appeal here to your conscience: would you endure the commission by another of the wrong, which you want to go unpunished in your own case?' This figure is relevant to rebuke.

Disiunctio,[547] which joins parts of speech together in a continuous sequence by removing conjunctions makes for vigour of language since one is borne along by a sort of impulse; we said something about this earlier among members and articles. It imparts gravity when one is giving instruction: 'Fear God, venerate the king, obey parents, be reverent towards elders, affable towards peers, modest towards inferiors, emulate the good, endure the wicked.'

Praecisio,[548] which the Greeks call ἀποσιώπησις [*aposiôpêsis*], Cicero *reticentia*, is when we break off our words and reserve what we are leaving unsaid for the judgment or conjecture of the listeners; this technique often makes something more terrible than if we stated it. Sometimes this is done in eagerness to move off to another subject, as in Virgil, 'Whom I – but it is better to settle the stirrings of the waves.'[549] But it especially suits indignation, as in Terence, 'I her – who him – who me – who would not – Just leave it.'[550] This is more fiery than if he had said, 'Am I to put up with her, who

* * * * *

544 Cf Livy *Ab urbe condita* 28.27.1–29.8. Erasmus recalls, somewhat loosely, the famous speech of Scipio to his troops in Spain after their mutiny.

545 For *communicatio*, cf Cicero *De oratore* 3.53.204: 'a sort of consultation with one's audience'; see also Quintilian 9.1.30 (copying Cicero *De oratore* 3.53.204) and 9.2.20–3.

546 See Quintilian 9.2.21 where he attributes this question to Cato.

547 For *disiunctio*, see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.27.38.

548 For *praecisio* 'aposiopesis,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.30.41; Quintilian 8.3.85 and especially 9.2.54.

549 Virgil *Aeneid* 1.135; quoted by Quintilian 9.2.54

550 Terence *Eunuchus* 65

let him in, who shut me out, who did not let me in? Just leave it.' It suggests someone threatening, yet it does not express those threats. Sometimes this is done out of reverence or modesty. Such is Virgil's phrase 'And we know who was with you – and at what shrine.'[551] 'How many there are who disgracefully misuse the limbs given for pious uses and use them for luxury, for thefts, for whorings, for – but I am ashamed to mention the rest.'

Pronominatio [552] suppresses the true name and produces a periphrasis composed of other words, or uses a different one, for the sake of indignation or emphasis or praise, for example, if someone were to say, 'the conqueror of Carthage' instead of Scipio, the way that we say 'the teacher of the gentiles' instead of Paul, 'the prince of the apostolic order' instead of Peter, 'the Virgin Mother' instead of Mary, 'the Redeemer of the human race' instead of Jesus, likewise if someone were to call Catiline 'the disturber of the republic,' and Nero or Phalaris 'the cruel prince.'[553]

Denominatio [554] and *intellectio*[555] are types of synecdoche when one thing is understood out of another. They contribute not only to adornment but often to forcefulness as well, for it is more damning to call someone a 'devotee of Mammon' or 'of Venus' than to say 'devoted to greed' or 'to lust.' Thus it is more forceful to call someone 'like Mars' than 'warlike,' likewise to call someone corrupted by pleasures and luxury 'a slave of the belly and of the gullet.' In the same way it is more vigorous to say, 'Mars is on his tongue,' 'Athena is on his palate'; and 'girt with iron' is more vigorous than if you should say 'girt with a sword.' Thus when we say that 'we glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,'[556] we mean that 'we have been redeemed by the death of the Crucified.' Sometimes this figure is effective not for forcefulness but for settling difficult questions, such as when it is written that Christ rose after three days,[557] and that eight souls were saved in

* * * * *

551 Virgil *Eclogues* 3.8–9

552 For *pronominatio*, see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.31.42.

553 Phalaris was tyrant of Acragas (Agrigento) in Sicily and was known for his cruelty in executing victims in a fiery brazen bull; see *Adagia* I x 86 *Phalaridis imperium* 'To rule like Phalaris.'

554 For 'denomination' (metonomy), see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.32.43.

555 For 'intellection' (synecdoche), see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.33.44.

556 Cf Gal 6:14.

557 The time between Jesus' death on Good Friday around 3 pm and his resurrection early Easter Sunday morning amounts to fewer than two whole days. Passages from the Gospels, however, indicate that Jesus would rise after three days; see: Matt 12:40, 26:61, 27:40 and 63; Mark 8:31, 9:30, 10:34; John 2:19. The Nicean Creed, however, says 'on the third day' (*tertia die*, τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ).

the ark when eight persons are understood,[558] and that Christ assumed flesh when he assumed the totality of being human; similarly bread and wine is understood as the body and blood of the Lord. But because these are paraded both in grammarians and in rhetoricians, I shall delay the reader neither with a host of examples nor with careful attention to distinguishing the forms.

Hyperbole[559] even by its very name indicates augmentation that surpasses the credibility of truth, and its application is not timely unless the thing itself is exceptional, such as when Cicero says that 'Antony filled the whole tribunal with his vomit';[560] this was impossible, but we understand from it that his drunkenness was enormous. What is said is not true, but it is not a lie because no one is deceived.[561] Sometimes it is done through a similitude, for example Virgil, 'You would think that the Cyclades had been torn up / And swam about,'[562] sometimes through comparison,[563] such as when we say 'whiter than snow,' 'more fickle than the wind,' 'quicker than lightning,' 'dearer than eyes and life,' 'grimmer than death.' It is also done through transference, such as when we say that someone who is powerfully enamoured is 'on fire,' that someone who was in a great hurry 'flew,'[564] that someone who is immoderately indignant 'gnashes his teeth,' that someone who is directing threats 'flashes lightning.' Sometimes the hyperbole is doubled, when we use correction to add to something that surpasses the credibility of truth something that surpasses it even more.[565] There is an example in Cicero: 'What Charybdis is so voracious?

* * * * *

558 For 'eight souls' (*octo animae*), see 1 Pet 3:20, which uses the word 'souls' for the eight survivors in the ark; this concurs with Gen 7:13, which gives Noah and his wife, his three sons, and their wives.

559 For 'hyperbole,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.33.44; cf Quintilian 8.6.67–76; and Aristotle *Rhetoric* 3.11.17, 16. See 775–6.

560 Cicero *Philippics* 2.26.63. Erasmus cited this example before; see 636, 777–8, 783 above. See also Quintilian 8.4.8–9 and 8.6.68; see *De copia* CWE 24 592–3.

561 Like Quintilian, Erasmus obviously believes that the person hearing the hyperbole would understand it as a deliberate exaggeration, 'an elegant straining of the truth,' which 'involves the incredible'; see Quintilian 8.6.67–76, especially 74: 'It is enough to say that hyperbole lies, though without any intention to deceive.' See also *De copia* CWE 24 344.

562 Virgil *Aeneid* 8.691–2; cited also by Quintilian 8.6.68, which he gives 'to exalt our theme by the use of simile.'

563 See Quintilian 8.6.69.

564 Quintilian 8.6.69. Quintilian does not use the word 'correction' here, but see 9.1.30 and 35, 9.3.89.

565 For 'correction,' see Quintilian 8.6.70.

Do I say 'Charybdis'? She, if she existed, was a single creature; good God, I scarcely think that Ocean could have sucked down so quickly so many things so dispersed, situated in such distant places.'[566] The comparison of the man's rapacity to Charybdis contained hyperbole; to this a greater hyperbole was added, the comparison of the whole ocean. This is also done through increment,[567] such as when Pindar says in his hymns[568] that Hercules' attack against the Meropes was not like fire or winds or the sea but lightning; here of course the hyperbole has increased by three steps. The same method applies in diminution.[569] We say of a sick person, 'He's barely alive,' and it is said of someone who is extremely poor that 'he doesn't have a penny.' Something has been said about this figure among the methods of amplification.

On account of certain theologians who have been trained more in arguments than in Holy Writ and think it ridiculous to mention hyperbole when expounding Scripture – as if all the tropes that the grammarians have gathered from the poets are not found in the divine books[570] – it seems necessary here to confirm from a number of witnesses first that at Genesis 13 the Lord promises Abraham that he will make his descendants equal to the dust of the earth;[571] the statement makes no sense unless you admit a trope, whether you interpret it of those who were procreated or will be born according to the flesh from Abraham's stock, or of those who are called the children of Abraham because they imitate his faith. For even if you take it as referring to the whole human race from the beginning of the world all the way to its end, it still will not equal the dust of the earth. But someone could equivocate here on the grounds that he made Abraham's descendants equal to the dust of the earth in the sense that they, like the dust of the earth, are uncountable by man because of their immense numbers, for there follows, 'If any man can count the dust of the earth, he will be able to count your seed as well.' But Augustine at *De civitate Dei* 16.21 does not hesitate to defend this passage as a hyperbole in which more was said than was the case; yet what is understood, namely that his posterity was going

* * * * *

566 Cicero *Philippics* 2.27.67; cited by Quintilian 8.6.70.
567 For 'increment,' see 776–9 above.
568 Quintilian gives this example; see 8.6.71. The *Odes* of Pindar are not extant in their entirety though many fragments survive. See *Pindari carmina, cum fragmentis, pars II Fragmenta. Indices* ed Hervicus Maehler (Leipzig 1989) 9–11; see Fragment 33a (page 10) and n33a.
569 For 'diminution,' see Quintilian 8.6.73 and 774, 789–90 above.
570 Augustine also makes this point in *De doctrina christiana* 4.29.40.
571 Gen 13:16

to be exceedingly numerous and would be spread through all the peoples of the earth, is not false.

Likewise, what was said about Judah at Genesis 49: 'He will wash his robe in wine and his garment in the blood of the grape.'[572] Origen in *Homily 17* says that the literal sense, which he does not reject, at least in this passage, makes no sense here unless we take the great abundance of wine to be indicated hyperbolically in the sense that it is going to be cheaper than water.[573] What precedes also hints at this: 'binding his foal to the vineyard and his she-ass, oh my son, to the vine,'[574] for animals are bound not to a vine but to some stake or other.

Likewise, what is contained at Ecclesiastes 10:[575] 'Do not curse the king in your mind, and in the privacy of your bedchamber do not curse the rich man, because the birds of the sky will carry away your voice, and one with wings will announce your word.' The translator, whoever it was,[576] thinks that it was said ὑπερβολικῶς [hyperbolically]; he says, 'As we are accustomed to say, even the walls themselves, which are witnesses when we speak, will not conceal what they have heard.'[577]

* * * * *

572 Gen 49:11

573 Erasmus speaks of Origen as having composed seventeen homilies, but scholars today hold that we have only sixteen homilies from Origen. See Louis Doutreleau's discussion of this manuscript problem in Origène *Homélies sur la Genèse* SC 7 *bis* 14–16. An internal analysis of *Homily 17* shows it was compiled from two fragments that had been reversed from Rufinus' work on the Blessings of the Patriarchs. Erasmus is basically repeating his points in the *Ratio*; see *Ratio* 269 and n4, where he gives as his reference Origen *Homily 17.8*. Erasmus concurs with Origen in holding that Gen 49:11 contains a hyperbole referring to 'the extraordinary and exuberant fertility of the field' (*Ratio* 1519).

574 Gen 49:11

575 Eccles 10:20. Erasmus' original text reads: 'Likewise what is contained at Ecclesiasticus 10 . . .' He obviously meant 'Ecclesiastes' since the reference is to Ecclesiastes, not to Ecclesiasticus. Also, Erasmus is likely citing this passage from memory, or with one eye on the Septuagint, because the verse varies somewhat from the Vulgate.

576 Erasmus might be referring to the translator of the Hebrew into Greek, presumably one of the seventy Hebrew scholars at Alexandria who according to legend translated the Hebrew scriptures into Greek, which resulted in the Septuagint. But here Erasmus seems confused, because it is Jerome who adds the words 'to be understood hyperbolically' (*hyperbolice intellegendum*) right after quoting verse 20. See Jerome *Commentary on Ecclesiastes, Commentarius in Ecclesiasten* CCSL 72 343:8.

577 The quotation is from Jerome's comment on Eccles 10:20; see *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten* 72 343; FOC 66 119.

St Jerome, in expounding Ezekiel 31,[578] wants what is reported there about the power and loftiness of the king of the Assyrians to be taken ὑπερβολικῶς, for there is not and never has been any tree whose branches could offer nests to all the birds of the sky or shade to all the beasts of the earth or a seat to all the nations, and there was no king of the Assyrians who ruled all peoples; rather this trope is used to show his huge and widespread dominion. With the same trope Virgil said of the Roman people, 'It will make its rule and fame equal to the earth and heaven.'[579] There is a similar passage in the same prophet about the prince of Tyre.[580] Again, in Daniel 4,[581] 'I looked: and behold, a tree in the middle of the earth, and its height touching heaven, and the sight thereof stretching all the way to the ends of the whole earth.' Strictly speaking, there never was any such tree; no prince ever gained such power according to the lowest form of tropology;[582] but lest we reject the literal sense, Jerome observes that all this should be taken through hyperbole of King Nebuchadnezzar.[583] God's promise to the Hebrews in Exodus that he will lead them into a land flowing with milk and honey[584] belongs to the same figure of speech and signifies only an outstanding fertility; thus Virgil, 'Rivers of milk then, then rivers of nectar will flow.'[585] Many such tropes are found in the books of the Old Testament; some who fail to recognize them reject the literal sense and have recourse to allegories.

Nor are hyperboles difficult to come by in the books of the New Testament, for instance at Luke 2, 'An edict went out from Caesar Augustus

* * * * *

578 Ezekiel 31. See Jerome *Commentarii in Ezechielem* CCSL 75 438 139–40 (ὑπερβολικῶς).

579 Virgil *Aeneid* 6.782. Erasmus' citation (*imperium terris famamque aequabit Olympo*) varies from the Oxford Classical Texts edition (*imperium terris, animos aequabit Olympo*).

580 Ezek 28:11–19

581 Dan 4:7–8

582 Erasmus uses tropology here as a figure of speech; see Quintilian 8.6.1–76, especially 76: 'Hyperbole only has positive value when the thing about which we have to speak transcends the ordinary limits of nature. We are then allowed to amplify, because the real size of the thing cannot be expressed, and it is better to go too far than not to go far enough.' See 863, 896, 957 below.

583 Jerome *In Danielem prophetam* 4.7–8 CCSL 75A 813: *haec omnia nos hyperbolice dicta debeamus accipere*.

584 Exod 3:8 and 17, 13:5

585 Erasmus mistakenly attributes this to Virgil; but the quotation, somewhat modified, is from Ovid *Metamorphoses* 1.111 (*flumina iam lactis, iam flumina nectaris ibant*).

that the entire world should be enrolled,'[586] for Augustus never held sway over the whole world, inasmuch as he never ruled the Goths or Armenians, as Ambrose acknowledges when expounding this passage;[587] likewise in the last chapter of John, 'Nor do I think that the world itself can hold those books, which must be written.'[588] Chrysostom[589] and Cyril[590] frankly acknowledge the hyperbole, and Augustine does not oppose it,[591] though he also adduces another fancy of his own. I think that further examples of hyperbole include when the Lord says that Capernaum, having been exalted all the way to the sky, will be dragged down to hell,[592] meaning that those who were then immoderately proud in their prosperity would sink to the most calamitous state, and likewise when he says to offer the other cheek as well to someone who strikes one cheek,[593] to go another two miles as well with someone who tells you to go a mile,[594] to a thief who is stealing your

* * * * *

586 Luke 2:1

587 Ambrose *In Lucam* 2.37 CCSL 14 46–7

588 John 21:25. See *Annotationes in Ioannem* 21.25 ASD VI-6 175: 'Augustine, offended here by the hyperbole, reports that "to hold" (*capere*) refers not to the space of place but to the heart (*animum*). Indeed in the same way the world is not able to hold one page of divine wisdom. Chrysostom and Cyril give no such interpretation; they state outright that it is a hyperbole . . .' For Cyril, see n590 below.

589 Chomarat (ASD V-5 117 261n) and P.F. Hovingh (ASD VI-6 175 286–95n) are correct in noting that Chrysostom does not state this in *Homily 88*, but he often uses the term ὑπερβολή in his writings; cf *Homily 88(87)*, *In Iohannem* PG 59 481. See *Commentary on Saint John the Apostle and Evangelist; Homilies [1–88]* trans Sister Thomas Aquinas Goggin FOC 33 and 41; for homilies 87 and 88, see FOC 41 458–78.

590 See Cyril of Alexandria *Commentarii in Iohannem* PG 74 756, where he acknowledges the hyperbole in John 21:25 ('And we certainly think these things should be taken hyperbolically').

591 See Augustine *In Johannis Evangelium Tractatus* CXXIV CCSL 36 688:17–23; *On the Gospel of St. John Tractate* CXXIV NPNF 1st series 7 452: 'This mode of speaking is called by the Greek name hyperbole [*hyperbole*], by the masters not only of Greek, but also of Latin literature. And this mode is found not only here, but in several other parts also of the divine literature . . .'

592 Luke 10:15

593 Matt 5:39 and Luke 6:29; see Erasmus *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 108–9, which does not speak of hyperbole; but see *Annotationes in Matthaeum* ASD VI-5 146: 'Haec Christi hyperbole mea sententia nihil aliud docet quam summam patientiam animique moderationem . . .'

594 Matt 5:41; see Erasmus *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 108–9 and *Annotationes in Matthaeum* ASD VI-5 146, where he makes no comment on the hyperbolic nature of Christ's words.

coat to hand over your cloak also,[595] discouraging all revenge and calling for perfect forbearance.[596] Otherwise, if you do not admit a trope, neither he himself nor any of the saints provided an example of what he commanded. Indeed, Chrysostom and Theophylact acknowledge hyperbole in the Lord's words 'Let your left hand not know what your right hand is doing,'[597] as also in 'When you pray, enter your bedchamber,'[598] since it only means that one should avoid displaying one's good deeds. Similarly, when he tells us to pray without ceasing,[599] he is commending zeal in prayer.

Of this sort is what Paul writes to the Romans, that their faith has been proclaimed in the entire world,[600] meaning a widespread fame, inasmuch as even Christ at that time had not been proclaimed in the entire world. There is a similar passage in Colossians 1, when he says that 'the gospel has been proclaimed to every creature that is under heaven.'[601]

But it would be an endless task to continue enumerating all the passages from Scripture; these are sufficient to prove that hyperbole is common in Holy Writ and that it is useful for explaining difficulties. I shall add that in the approved Doctors of the church one finds some expressions that are phrased quite vehemently for the purpose of deterrence or encouragement and could not be excused if we rule out hyperbole. There is an example of this in Jerome's letter to Heliodorus: 'Whoever says that

* * * * *

595 Matt 5:40

596 Luke 18:7

597 Matt 6:3. See John Chrysostom *Homilia in Matthaeum* (19.2) PG 57 (1862) 275: *hyperbolice id posuit*; see also *Homilia in Matthaeum* (18.2) PG 57 266–7: *Ideo rursum simili utitur hyperbole*; and Theophylact *The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria, of the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew* in *Bl. Theophylact's Explanation of the New Testament* trans Christopher Stade (House Springs, Mo 2000) I 56: 'Using hyperbole of language . . .'; PG 123 201D. Albert Rabil Jr calls attention to Erasmus' use of Theolophylact in the 1527 *Annotationes* and especially in conjunction with his references to the homilies of John Chrysostom: 'Erasmus seems to have discovered the dependence of Theophylactus on the works of John Chrysostom at this time. For in twenty-five of the seventy-six citations of Chrysostom he begins with a phrase like: "Chrysostom and Theophylactus interpret the passage in this way." And he notes several times that Theophylactus is dependent upon Chrysostom's homilies' (118); see Albert Rabil Jr *Erasmus and the New Testament: The Mind of a Christian Humanist* (San Antonio 1972) 115–18.

598 Matt 6:6

599 Luke 18:1; cf 1 Thess 5:17. See also Erasmus *In psalmum 33* CWE 64 316.

600 Rom 1:8

601 Col 1:23

he believes in Christ ought himself too to walk as he walked.'[602] Jerome adduces this text as proof that it is not right for a Christian to possess anything of his own: he affirms in the same passage that no one can be perfect who has something of his own; again, the Lord says, 'Everyone who has not renounced all that he possesses cannot be my disciple.'[603] And he demands this from Heliodorus not as a monk but as a Christian, though at that time only continence was demanded of monks, because there follows 'Why are you a Christian of fearful mind?'[604] In his letter to Nepotianus he also forbids clerics every possession, saying, 'But if someone has had anything besides the Lord – gold, silver, possessions, for example – the Lord will not be his portion.'[605] Sometimes he encourages peace by discouraging war as if he were condemning all war. If we acknowledge hyperbole in passages of this sort, we will free good people from slander. There are many other passages that the orthodox ancients interpret through hyperbole, but I think that these are enough against those who deride it as something profane whenever we adduce hyperbole or some other trope derived from the grammarians or rhetoricians to explain a difficulty of Scripture.

Permutatio [606] seems to be what others call 'irony,'[607] a Greek word, but one that is more familiar than the Latin. We use this when we say something other than what we mean, in order to mock or to upbraid or to refute.

To mock, as Turnus does towards Drances in Virgil: 'Go ahead and accuse me of fear, / Drances, since your own right hand has produced / So many heaps of Trojan slaughter.'[608] It is similar when we call a terribly poor man a Midas or a Croesus, a decrepit old man a boy, a dwarf a giant.

* * * * *

602 Jerome Ep 14:6 (to Heliodorus, Monk) NPNF 2nd series 6 16; cf 1 John 2:6.
603 Luke 14:33
604 Jerome Ep 14.5 (to Heliodorus, Monk) NPNF 2nd series 6 15
605 Jerome Ep 52.5 (to Nepotian[us]) NPNF 2nd series 6 91
606 For 'permutation,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.34.46. Harry Caplan renders the word as 'allegory': 'Allegory is a manner of speech denoting one thing by the letter of the words, but another by their meaning. It assumes three aspects: comparison, argument, and contrast'; [Cicero] *Ad C. Herennium* trans H. Caplan, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass and London 1989).
607 For 'irony,' see Quintilian 9.2.44–54 (*ironia, illusio*): '*Irony* involving a figure does not differ from the *irony* which is a *trope*, as far as its *genus* is concerned, since in both cases we understand something which is the opposite of what is actually said . . .' (9.2.44).
608 Virgil *Aeneid* 11.383–5; see Quintilian 9.2.51. Another of many instances where Erasmus relies on Quintilian for his examples.

One may use it to upbraid, as when, after compiling a long list of cruel deeds, we add, 'This is that vaunted mercy of yours!'[609] Some think that that remark in the Gospel at Matthew 26, 'Sleep now and rest,'[610] is of this sort; certainly Theophylact acknowledges the irony, and Augustine does not reject it outright. Without it Origen, Chrysostom, Hilary, and Jerome thoroughly torment themselves and resort to allegories; otherwise how is it consistent for someone who a little before had rebuked his followers because they slept to tell them now to sleep, especially when he next adds, 'Rise, let us go hence.'[611] Likewise, there is an uncontroversial example by Elijah at 3 Kings 18,[612] 'Shout with a louder voice – for he is a god, and is talking perhaps, or in an inn, or on the road, or he must be asleep and needs to be wakened.' Similarly, when Paul at 1 Corinthians 6 gives orders that those who are contemptible should be appointed as judges,[613] the gloss separating the verses shows the presence of irony; again at 2 Corinthians 12, 'Except that I never burdened you, pardon me for this wrong.'[614] Augustine in book 1 of *Contra adversarium Legis et Prophetarum*[615] says that

* * * * *

609 Cf Quintilian 9.2.51.

610 Matt 26:45. Cf book 2 505. See Erasmus' comments on this passage in *Annotationes in Matthaeum* ASD VI-5 328. He notes that Theophylact also finds 'irony' (*nonnullam ironiam*) in this passage. See *The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria, of the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew* in *Bl. Theophylact's Explanation of the New Testament* trans Christopher Stade (House Springs, Mo 2000) I 232–3: 'Showing that he has no need of their help, even when He is about to be betrayed, He says to them, "Sleep on now." Or, He is speaking with irony, as if to say, "Behold, the betrayer is at hand – sleep, if you so desire and time allows."' See also *Ratio* 271:22–4; and Jerry H. Bentley 'Biblical Philology and Christian Humanism: Lorenzo Valla and Erasmus as Scholars of the Gospels' *Sixteenth Century Journal* 8 Supplement (1977) 8–28, especially 24.

611 Matt 26:45. In *Annotationes in Matthaeum* ASD VI-5 328, Erasmus refers to these comments of Theophylact, Augustine, Origen, Chrysostom, Hilary, and Jerome. See *The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact* (n610 above); Augustine *The Harmony of the Gospels* (*De consensu Evangeliarum*) 3.4.11 NPNF 1st series 6 183; Origen *Commentarium in Matthaeum* 96 PG 13 174–8; Chrysostom *Homiliarum in Matthaeum* 83.1 PG 58 747; Hilary *In Matthaeum* 31.11 SC 258 23–9; PL 9 1070; and Jerome *Commentariorum in Matheum libri IV* CCSL 77 256.

612 3 Kings 18:27 (= 1 Kings 18:27). Erasmus has already used this example in book 2 505.

613 1 Cor 6:4

614 2 Cor 12:13

615 Augustine *Contra adversarium Legis et Prophetarum* (*Answer to an Enemy of*

this was not spoken by the Apostle in a straightforward fashion but rather with the irony of someone who is upbraiding, of the sort that he thinks is also found in the passage of Genesis, 'Behold, Adam has become as one of us,'[616] and Virgil, 'Outstanding praise indeed';[617] thus Cicero on Milo, 'When this ambusher.'[618]

Or we may use irony to refute, as in Paul's words in the same passage, 'But so be it; I have not burdened you, but since I was clever I caught you by trickery.'[619] It is done by pretending a concession or confession, sometimes both praise and admiration also. In sum, irony traverses almost all the figures. It is concession when we say that we do not want to oppose someone who is asserting something ridiculous, implicitly upbraiding his weakness,[620] as when Paul, writing to the Corinthians, pretends that he is foolish and begs them to bear patiently with a stupid man boasting about himself.[621] Confession through irony is not commended except when it is harmless, such as Cicero's example, 'You have then, Tubero, what an accuser should most desire, a defendant who confesses,'[622] or when we admit what has been charged in a different sense. Salvius Liberalis, in his defence of a rich accused, said, 'What is it to Caesar if Hipparchus possesses a hundred million?' branding Vespasian as someone who coveted the property of the rich. The emperor approved it as a correct remark, interpreting it as having been a straightforward statement.[623] But I cease citing examples, which are everywhere to hand.

* * * * *

the Law and the Prophets) 1.15.23 WSA I-18 370: 'So, too, when the apostle says, "Pardon me this injury" (2 Cor 12:13), he clearly wants it understood ironically, if there is present someone to proclaim it with learning and not slander it in ignorance.' Chomarat (ASD V-5 121 323–4n) states that Augustine does not speak with irony in 2 Cor 12:13: 'Mais il ne parle pas d'ironie.'

616 Gen 3:22. See Augustine *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (*On Genesis: A Refutation of the Manichees*) 2.22.33 WSA I-13 93–5.

617 Virgil *Aeneid* 4.93

618 Cicero *Pro Milone* 10.28 ('while our supposed conspirator'); see also 19.49 ('so Milo . . . like the conspirator he was . . .'). With irony Cicero says this of Milo, whom he is defending, the implication being that it was *not* Milo who was lying in wait to kill Clodius.

619 2 Cor 12:16

620 For 'concession,' see Quintilian 9.2.51.

621 2 Cor 11:7–12:13

622 For 'confession' and this passage from Cicero's *Pro Ligario* 1.2, see Quintilian 9.2.51.

623 Suetonius *Divus Vespasianus* 8.13.

The preacher must be advised to use this figure quite sparingly, for it would not befit a Christian orator to εἰρωνεύειν [speak ironically] everywhere like Socrates.[624] Yet this figure is frequently applied in canonical Scripture and also in the writings of the orthodox when they mock pagan gods and superstitious rituals, for example in Isaiah, Cyprian, Tertullian, Augustine, and Prudentius, for some things are so ridiculous that they are weakened more by mockery than by refutation; such also are the dogmas of certain heretics, of the Ophites,[625] of Basilides,[626] and of the Manichaeans.[627]

Licentia [frankness of speech],[628] which the Greeks call *parrhesia*, does not contribute to the vigour of language but is applied to soften things that have been said too freely, lest they offend the listener. For example, 'Forgive me if I shall seem to speak more freely than is fair,' and 'If excessively free

* * * * *

624 For Socrates' use of irony, see book 2 654 and n970.

625 Ophites were a second-century Gnostic sect, which, like the Marcionites, saw a radical incompatibility between the Old and New Testaments. The sect's name derives from the Greek word 'serpent' (*ophis*) and means 'worshippers of the serpent'; its members held that the serpent in the Garden of Eden was the bringer of knowledge (*gnosis*), which God did not want Adam and Eve to possess. Information on this sect derives principally from Irenaeus *Adversus haereses* (1.30.5–14), which Erasmus edited in 1526 and dedicated to Bernhard von Cles, prince-bishop of Trent; see letter to Bernhard von Cles (Basel, 27 August 1526), Ep 1738:134–6 and n35, and Ep 1232 to Nicolaas van Broeckhoven, Anderlecht, 31 August (1521), where he puts the Ophites among those whose 'errors were so grotesque that the very men who held the doctrines were ashamed of them' (66–7); and Tertullian *Adversus Marcionem* (*The Five Books Against Marcion*) CCSL 1 437–726, ANF III 269–475. For Bernhard von Cles, see CEBR I 313–5; and for Nicolaas van Broeckhoven, see CEBR I 204–5.

626 Basilides (of Alexandria), Gnostic exegete of the second century whose works survive today only in fragments. Like the Ophites, he also taught a type of radical dualism that rejected the God of the Old Testament and invented Abraxas as 'the first principle.' Erasmus says that 'he seems to have given Valentinian a seedbed [*seminarium*] of insanity'; letter to Bernhard von Cles (Basel, 27 August 1526), Ep 1738:130–3. For other comments on Basilides, Ophites, Iudaites, etc, see Ep 1232 to Nicolaas van Broeckhoven, Anderlecht, 31 August 1521. For von Cles and van Broeckhoven, see note above.

627 For Manichaeanism, see book 2 588 and n612, 608 and n720, 618 and n778. Erasmus' knowledge of this sect would have derived from Tertullian *De praescriptione haereticorum* (*The Prescription against Heretics*) ANF III 243–67 and from many of Augustine's writings. See Erasmus' preface to the *Opera* of Augustine, letter to Alonso de Fonseca (Freiburg, [May] 1529), Ep 2157:219–41.

628 For 'licence' (*parrhesia*), see Quintilian 9.2.27 and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.36.48. See also *Moria* CWE 27 135: 'And they never sound so servile as when they're anxious to give an impression of plain speaking.'

speech offends you, it is more just to be indignant at those whose wickedness has forced me to say this,' 'If the bitterness of my speech is troublesome, reflect that serious diseases are not healed by mild drugs,' 'I will speak rather harshly, but my love for you drives me to it,' 'I shall be speaking reluctantly, and would not speak at all were it not in your interest.' Paul used this figure in Acts: 'Brothers, let me be permitted to speak boldly before you about the patriarch David,'[629] etc, and Paul frequently softens excessively harsh statements. Moreover, frankness is softened by an extenuation of the evil or by an admixture of praise; thus Paul minimizes the crime of the Galatians,[630] dreadful in itself, by casting the blame upon the false apostles who had taken advantage of their naivety, and yet he calls it bewitchment rather than deceit. Sometimes there lurks under this figure an adulation that is the more harmful because disguised under the sham of freedom.[631] For example, the man who addressed the emperor in public asking permission to speak freely said, when it was granted, 'No one dares tell you; I cannot keep it silent. You are wearing yourself out with vigils and concern for the state, and you do not spare yourself. This is worrisome to the people.'[632] But one of those who accompanied the emperor commented wittily, 'I fear that this man will be destroyed by his free speech.' If only there were no preachers among Christians who use such a ploy to flatter silly women and the mighty!

Furthermore, just as frankness keeps freedom of speech from offending, so *diminutio* [self-deprecation][633] keeps what has to be said from seeming to have been said arrogantly. People have fussy ears, and there is nothing of which they are less tolerant than someone saying something too grand about himself. I forego examples, since the topic entails no difficulty.

I do not see why *descriptio* [vivid description], which puts the consequences of an action before the eyes, needs to be classified among figures, for *hypotyposis* is a special excellence in oratory, but it belongs to every occasion; it will be discussed soon.[634]

* * * * *

629 Acts 2:29 (Vulg)

630 Gal 3:1–5

631 See eg the quotation from *Moria* CWE 27 135.

632 The source of this quotation is unknown. Chomarat questions whether it is something Erasmus himself heard or witnessed before the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V; ASD V-5 123 361n.

633 For 'diminution' or 'understatement' (*diminutio* or *deminutio*), see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.38.50.

634 Erasmus has already discussed *hypotyposis* 'to put before the eyes' at 517, 807 above; see 843, 860–1, 877, 885 below.

I have the same opinion about *divisio*, which the Greeks call διλημμα, which was discussed above among arguments.[635]

Frequentatio [accumulation], which the Greeks call συναθροισμός,[636] has many advantages (we discussed these above)[637] because it gathers into a single bundle, as it were, and puts into view arguments that have been treated in a diffuse and scattered manner, but it is not a figure of speech except when it is applied to elevate something, as we indicated when we discussed the methods of amplification.

Expolitio [elaboration][638] is not properly a figure of speech but a kind of argument consisting of five parts, though nothing forbids using more parts to enrich whatever we have undertaken to prove. Since we have said quite enough about this in the second book of *De copia*, it is not my intention to delay the reader here.

Contentio,[639] called *antitheton* in Greek, is produced either by contradictory words or by contrary sentiments though there is not an obvious clash in the words. A figure of speech does not exist automatically wherever there are contraries, but an appropriate interrelation of contraries creates a figure producing either grace or forcefulness of language. 'We hate virtue when present, miss it when absent': here there is a clash in the words. 'We hate virtue when present, look for it invidiously when removed from sight': here it is in the statements. 'He is brave in peace, faint-hearted in war': here likewise there is a clash in the words. 'They are lions at home, deer in war':[640] here there is a clash in the statements, as in the famous passage of Cicero's *Pro Murena*: 'You are awake before dawn to answer those who are seeking your advice, he to make a timely arrival at his destination with his army; it is the song of roosters that wakens you, that of trumpets that wakens him,'[641] etc; here the comparison of dissimilar things is less obvious. We

* * * * *

635 See 678–85, 701–2 above.

636 For 'Frequentation' (or 'accumulation'), see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.40.52–3. It 'occurs when the points scattered throughout the whole cause are collected in one place so as to make the speech more impressive or sharp or accusatory . . .'; and Quintilian 8.4.26–7.

637 See 788–9 above.

638 For 'expolition' (or 'elaboration'), see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.42.54–8. See also *De copia* CWE 24 630–1, 679.

639 For 'contention' ('antithesis'), see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.15.21, 4.45.58; and Quintilian 9.3.81.

640 For 'Lions at home . . .,' see *Adagia* IV v 80.

641 Cicero *Pro Murena* 9.22; Quintilian uses this example of comparison (*comparatio*) at 9.2.100.

have already observed that in an oppositional arrangement contraries illuminate each other in turn.[642] For example, if someone were to exhort his hearers to forego pleasures in favour of honourable pursuits and were to set against each other the evils that follow from the former, the good that follows from the latter, a great deal of vigour will be added to the expression. There is also another method of comparing contraries, not without charm, a figure that Paul uses frequently and successfully, such as at 2 Corinthians 6: 'Through the weapons of righteousness on the right and on the left, through glory and shame, through infamy and good repute: as deceivers and truth tellers, just like those unknown and known, as if dying and behold! we live,[643] as if sad but always rejoicing, like the needy but enriching many, as though having nothing and possessing everything.'[644] The most familiar examples are when instead of 'all' we say 'the greatest and the least,' 'boys and old men.'

Conformatio, which the Greeks call προσωποποιία [making a character],[645] that is, the imaginative representation of a character, contributes much to the variety and the gravity of a speech, but it falls flat unless the importance of the subject calls for a fiction of this sort and unless the language and behaviour of this imaginary character is of the kind that such a person would probably say or do if he were present. Not only is this figure used to introduce the characters of absent persons as though they were present, but we also raise people long since dead from their tombs and bring them on stage, so to speak.[646] In fact we even ascribe speech to regions and cities and other inanimate things. In fact we even personify the virtues themselves or the vices and similar things. Finally, we give voices to God himself and to the saints. Cicero introduces his homeland expostulating with

* * * * *

642 See book 2 669–71.

643 Erasmus' quotation of 2 Cor 6:7–10 follows the Vulgate, but at 2 Cor 6:9 after 'and behold! we live' (*et ecce vivimus*), he omits the phrase 'as punished, and not yet killed' (*ut castigati et non mortificati*). His own version of the New Testament, however, includes the phrase, though altered (*quasi correpti et non occisi*). See LB VI 770B.

644 2 Cor 6:7–10

645 For 'conformation' (or 'personification'), see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.53.66. See also Quintilian 9.2.29–37.

646 Cicero uses this rhetorical device with great effect; see especially the two examples in *Pro Caelio* 14.33–8, where Cicero has the illustrious, long-deceased Appius Claudius Caecus, the censor, rebuke Clodia, his descendant, and has Clodia's brother Clodius interrogate her about her relationship with Caelius. Quintilian comments on the great effectiveness of this; see 3.8.54 and 12.10.61.

Catiline.[647] In Plato's *Crito* Socrates imagines the laws dissuading him from escaping from prison.[648] The prophet Micah even introduces God expostulating with his people.[649] Solomon too makes Wisdom herself encourage the pursuit of wisdom, for example at Proverbs 8, 'The Lord created me in the beginning of his ways,'[650] likewise, 'Through me kings reign,'[651] etc. In Psalm 113 the prophet addresses the sea, river, mountains, and hills, and depicts them replying, 'The earth has been moved by the face of the Lord,'[652] etc, likewise Baruch 3, 'The stars moreover gave light in their watches and rejoiced; they were summoned and said "We are here." '[653] This is done more freely in poems, in tragedies, comedies, and dialogues. In the epistle of Jude a book is cited in which the archangel Michael battles with the devil over Moses' body.[654] There is a dialogue extant among the works of Augustine, though spurious, in which the church disputes with the synagogue.[655] Though it is not extant, a satire of Ennius is cited in which he creates a debate between life and death,[656] the way that Prodicus, according to Xenophon, imagines pleasure and virtue vying before Hercules. Plutarch makes the pig Gryllus dispute with Ulysses.[657] Virgil and Homer attribute a character to Rumour,[658] Ovid to Sleep and to Earth;[659] but Homer's attribution of speech to Achilles' horses[660] and to some ships[661] is too daring for imitation, though a she-ass rebukes her master in Holy

* * * * *

647 Cicero *In Catilinam* 1.27 and 17–18. Quintilian gives this example to which Erasmus refers; see 9.2.32.
648 Plato *Crito* 50A–54D
649 Micah 6:3–5
650 Prov 8:22
651 Prov 8:15
652 Ps 114:3–7 (Vulg 113:3–7)
653 Bar 3:34–5
654 Jude 9
655 See *Dialogus de altercatione ecclesiae et synagogae* PL 42 (1865) 1131–40.
656 Quintilian mentions this work; see 9.2.36: 'Again, we often personify the abstract, as Virgil does with Fame, or as Xenophon records that Prodicus did with Virtue and Pleasure, or as Ennius does when, in one of his satires, he represents Life and Death contending with one another.'
657 Plutarch *Moralia* 986B–992E ('Beasts are Rational'). See CWE 31 27 n164.
658 Virgil *Aeneid* 4.173–97; Homer *Iliad* 2.93–4, *Odyssey* 24.413–14
659 Ovid *Metamorphoses* 11.592–629 (Sleep); *Fasti* 1.671–704, 2.719, 6.267 (Earth)
660 *Iliad* 17.424–58. Achilles' horses do not speak but weep and suffer human emotions.
661 *Odyssey* 8.557–63. Homer does not endow the Phoenician ships with the power of speech, though 'the ships themselves understand the thoughts and minds of men . . .'

Writ.[662] There is a type of prosopopoeia in which we introduce an indefinite person, for example, 'Here perhaps someone will say,'[663] 'Here I know that the heretics will cry out in protest.'

Akin to this figure is sermocination [dialogue] or διαλογισμός.[664] When we attribute a continuous speech to the character that we are inventing, it is *conformatio*. When we reply immediately to what has been proposed by it, it is *sermocinatio*, as in the first book of Gregory of Nazianzus' *Theology*,[665] when he proposes many questions to a dialectician and makes him respond to each. But this figure will be discussed in its own place,[666] since it contributes more to the pleasantness of language than to its seriousness.

Akin to *conformatio* is *apostrophe*,[667] which directs our speech away from those whom we were addressing towards another person, whether present or absent, or towards a thing to which we are attaching a character, and this has no place except when the speech is fired up. Cicero redirected his words from Caesar to Quintus Tubero: 'For what was that sword of yours doing, Tubero, in the battle line at Pharsalus,'[668] etc. I heard someone who, in a discussion of certain Franciscans who lived in a dissolute fashion, not inelegantly turned to address St Francis: 'O Francis, if only you could see what your little brothers are doing, how far they have degenerated from the way of life that you had prescribed for them.' Thus we address the world, sin, and Satan: 'O world, how inviting are your promises, how bitter your returns,' 'O lying sin, what sweetness you kept promising at the start;

* * * * *

662 Num 22:30 (Balaam's ass)

663 Cf Quintilian 9.2.36: 'We may also introduce some imaginary person without identifying him, as we do in the phrases, "At this point some one will interpose," or "Some one will say" . . .' Erasmus uses this technique frequently throughout *Ecclesiastes*.

664 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.52.65: 'Dialogue (*sermocinatio*) consists in assigning to some person language which as set forth conforms with his character . . .'

665 Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio 27* (Theological Oration 1); see Nazianzus 31: 'However, since you are so fond of talking and of the dialectic method, I will address a few questions to you; and "you shall answer," as the voice speaking through the whirlwind and the clouds said to Job.' For Gregory of Nazianzus and his writings, see book 2 491 n119.

666 See 852 and n726 below.

667 For 'apostrophe,' see Quintilian 4.1.63–70 and 9.2.38–44: '[apostrophe] consists in the diversion of our address from the judge . . . [it] is also applied to utterances that divert the attention of the hearer from the question before them . . .' (9.2.38–9). See also *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.15.22; and Lausberg §§762–5.

668 Erasmus quotes Quintilian who cites this passage from Cicero's *Pro Ligario* 3.9; see Quintilian 9.2.38. See also 788 above.

how different is what you are now saying to someone caught in your nets,' and Prudentius, 'O twisting serpent,'[669] etc, and the Lord in the Gospel, 'O unbelieving and perverse people, how long shall I endure you?'[670] and at Zachariah 13 God addresses his sabre, 'Sabre, be raised over my shepherd.'[671] This figure is wonderfully effective for rousing emotions if it is applied in its place and intelligently.

Demonstratio [vivid demonstration], which the Greeks call *hypotyposis*[672] with more justification since it puts a scene before our eyes in such a way that it appears to be happening rather than reported, is useful whether for the clarity of the language or for stirring any emotions at all, and it makes a significant contribution to pleasantness if the subject is comic. We are using this figure if we relate not just the thing that was done but also what preceded, what happened in the business itself, what followed; we add appropriate gestures and speech and whatever our eyes would see if the event took place in our presence. There is delight in Cicero's virtual painting of how Antony left camp at night alone, with his head covered, and reached his girlfriend and gave her a letter as if it had been sent by Antony,[673] because the thing is comic in itself. Somewhat more serious, but of the same sort, is the example in Homer's *Iliad*, when Andromache goes to meet Hector at the gate (I have commented with some care on this passage in the second book of *De copia*).[674] It is especially through this faculty that the poet holds the reader's attention, as when, in presenting Penelope (whom he wishes to be considered chaste), he never shows her speaking to the suitors except

* * * * *

669 Prudentius *Cathemerinon* 6.141 (*o tortuose serpens*)

670 Matt 17:16

671 Zech 13:7 (*framea suscitare super pastorem meum*). Erasmus uses the word *phramea* (*framea*) for 'spear,' the word used in the title of the infamous work of Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger *Malleus maleficarum, maleficas et earum haeresim framea conterens* ([Speyer]: [Peter Drach] 1487).

672 See book 2 517 n269, 807 above. See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.55.68: 'It is Ocular Demonstration (*demonstratio*) when an event is so described in words that the business seems to be enacted and the subject to pass vividly before our eyes. This we can effect by including what has preceded, followed, and accompanied the event itself, or by keeping steadily to its consequences or the attendant circumstances . . .' See also Quintilian 9.2.40, who mentions that others give the name 'vivid illustration' to 'any representation of facts which is made in such vivid language that they appeal to the eye rather than the ear.' See also Cicero *De oratore* 3.53.202.

673 Cicero *Philippics* 2.31.77. Cicero sets his audience up for the humour of this account with his words, 'But regard the frivolity of the man!'

674 Homer *Iliad* 6.390–493; see *De copia* CWE 24 654–5.

from the room that he calls the ὑπερῷον [the upper chamber], with her face covered by a veil and supported by attendants.[675] This is the reason for the praise given to the narration in which Cicero relates how Milo set out from the city, etc.[676] There are certain things in it that do not seem relevant to the subject, though they still contribute to credibility because of the impression of ordinariness; for example, 'On that day, when he was dismissed from the senate, he came home, changed his shoes and clothes, tarried for a time while his wife got herself ready, as women do, then set out,' etc. Stronger emotions are stirred when one describes in a frightful tragedy, the destruction of a city, burning eyes, a loud shouting, a cloak turned back or thrown away, a sword flashing, etc.[677]

In this respect a rhetor has considerable affinity with painters, who strive to put a whole subject into view in such a way that the only thing lacking is speech.[678] Examples can be drawn from poets who possess this particular excellence, when they describe a battle, the destruction of a city, a fire, a storm, a plague, a famine, or an earthquake, or a flood, or something of the sort. But the preacher must beware of attaching something inappropriate to things and persons, the way that incompetent painters often add incongruous details to their paintings. For example, some describe Christ as wretched, with head downcast, with eyes twisted because of the crown of thorns forced upon his head, falling nine times upon the ground with his whole body, the Virgin Mother collapsing in a faint at the foot of the cross. And yet these things do not fit the character of Christ or his mother and are not in agreement with canonical Scripture or the commentaries of the ancients. Anything you want to add to Scripture should be highly probable. As we said before,[679] there is somewhat more leeway in stories about people, but short of the licence that pagan orators or historians claim.

This figure sets before our eyes not only what has happened but also what seems likely to happen if this or that occurs. In his *Pro Milone*, Cicero treated this locus with consummate artistry, describing the state of affairs

* * * * *

675 Homer *Odyssey* 1.328–36.

676 Cicero *Pro Milone* 28

677 Eg Cicero *Pro Milone* 29; cf Quintilian 9.2.40; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.55.68–9; Cicero *In Verrem* II 5.62.161–2; and Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 10.3.8–19.

678 Erasmus refers here to the famous dictum of Horace, *Ars poetica* 361, *Ut pictura poesis*; see also Erasmus' reflections on art in *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 398–9, where Bear and Lion discuss the painting of Albrecht Dürer as being in the tradition of the ancient Greek masters, Pamphilus of Macedonia and Apelles; and 'Ut pictura poesis' in *Classical Tradition* 958–9.

679 See book 2 517–18.

that would have ensued if Clodius had attained the praetorship:[680] 'Imagine,' he said, 'for imagination knows no constraints and envisions what it wishes in the same way as we interpret the objects that we see with our eyes: imagine, then, that I offered the following condition,'[681] etc. Examples are common in the books of the Old Testament, when they show the great happiness that will follow if men obey God's commands and, on the other hand, the great calamity they will face if they neglect God's teachings. The Mosaic blessings and curses are relevant here.

The appropriate application of *epitheta* [epithets] to the pious and the impious contributes not only to the adornment of language but often to emotion as well, but adding them everywhere is clumsy; Aristotle rightly condemns the epithets of Alcidamas as uninspired because he used them as the food, not as the seasoning.[682] It will be right to cite 'the ardent Paul' when the subject is love, 'the profound and eloquent John' when speaking of sublime mysteries, and love itself will rightly be called 'fiery,' just like 'unconquered faith,' 'patient hope,' 'flowering virginity,' 'sacred modesty,' 'pure' or 'chaste truth,' on the other hand 'filthy pleasure,' 'sordid luxury,' 'masked hypocrisy,' likewise 'fleeting human life,' 'bitter death,' 'hot-blooded youth,' 'sluggish old age.' The appeal will be double if the epithet should be commended by a trope, such as when we say 'viperish malice' or, as mentioned above, 'sluggish old age,' 'a grim spectacle' or 'blind love' or 'fretful poverty,' 'Pyladean friendship,'[683] 'a Stentorian shout,'[684] 'the madness of a dog, 'diabolical malice.' The phrases 'Seraphic Order,'[685] 'Cherubic Order,' which some now use, are of this sort.

* * * * *

680 See Cicero *Pro Milone* 32; Quintilian 9.2.41.

681 Cicero *Pro Milone* 79

682 Aristotle *Rhetoric* 3.3.3 (1406a)

683 'Pyladean friendship' refers to Pylades, companion of Orestes and son of Strophius, king of Phocis. Pylades appears in Aeschylus' *The Libation Bearers*, supporting Orestes in killing Aegisthus and Clytemnaestra. In *De amicitia* Cicero refers to a scene in a play written by his friend Marcus Pacuvius in which Pylades 'wished to be put to death instead of his friend' Orestes. See *De amicitia* 7.24; and *Antibarbari* CWE 23 19–20 with n18.

684 'Stentorian' refers to 'Stentor of the brazen voice, whose voice is as great as that of fifty other men'; see Homer *Iliad* 5.784–6. See also *Adagia* II iii 37 *Stentore clamosior* 'Noisier than Stentor.'

685 In Erasmus' time the term 'Seraphic Order' referred to the Order of Friars Minor, as the flaming seraph was associated with St Francis of Assisi's reception of the stigmata (see 810 n458 above) and was the name applied to St Bonaventure, 'the seraphic doctor,' presumably for the ardour of his theological writings. The 'Cherubic Order' refers to the Order of Preachers. The cherubim

But the attribution of particular epithets to certain persons – as if it were wrong to use any others, even those more appropriate – is too close to superstition, such as when they call the Roman pontiff 'most blessed,' cardinals and archbishops 'most reverend,' bishops and abbots 'reverend,' priors 'venerable,' the emperor 'most invincible,' kings 'most serene,' princes 'most illustrious.' Sometimes it is appropriate to an exclamation: 'Oh abominable crime!'[686] 'Oh detestable pleasure!' Otiose epithets are conceded to poets, in whose works they have a certain elegance; they say 'snowy milk' and 'shining white snow,' 'yellow gold, 'clear air, 'golden sun,' 'silvery moon,' 'heavy earth,' 'meandering rivers,' 'sail-bearing sea,' 'blind moles,' 'fearful deer,' 'wounding steel,' 'rolling river.'[687] The preacher applies them only when they accomplish something. They do this, moreover, when what is being said is either less impressive or less forceful without them, though here too there should be some moderation, for some add epithets to almost every word in order to create the impression of speaking more ardently, such as, for example, 'Dearest brothers, the desirable time of most holy Lent is here, which the most merciful Lord consecrated for us wretches as a most salubrious example and which the most Holy Church has imposed upon us by its most just ordinance and irrefutable authority.'

Furthermore, it is no less faulty to use inappropriate epithets than to use unnecessary ones. St Augustine had good reason to ridicule Petilianus,[688] a Donatist bishop but unlearned, because whenever he meant that the wicked were going to be consigned to hell he would say that they were going to be burned in crackling flames, and he would keep repeating this as if it were pretty, imitating Virgil, of course, who said, 'And to burn the light

* * * * *

stand second in rank to the seraphim among the nine choirs of angels in the heavenly hierarchy. Chomarat notes that in two letters written in the 1530s Erasmus takes up these epithets with 'a discrete irony'; see ASD V-5 131 517n. See also *Colloquia* (*Exequiae seraphicae / The Seraphic Funeral*) CWE 40 996–1032.

686 For this and for epithets as a trope, see Quintilian 8.6.40–3.

687 'Rolling river' (*volubilis amnis*); Chomarat does not alter Erasmus' text, which gives *volubilem animam* 'inconstant soul,' but he calls attention to Erasmus' discussion of epithets in *De copia* ASD I-6 106 217:505–8, where he uses many of the same epithets as examples; there, however, he uses the words *volubilis* and *amnis*, which appear in Horace *Epistles* 1.2.43: 'qui recte vivendi prorogat horam, rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille labitur et labetur in omne volubilis aevum.' 'Rolling river' seems to fit the context here.

688 Augustine (*Answer to Letters of Petilian, Bishop of Cirta*) *Contra litteras Petiliani* 2.32.72–3 NPNF 1st series 4 519–628; see pages 547–8; PL 43 283.

straw in crackling flames.'[689] Virgil did indeed use it aptly, for straws really do crackle if they are set on fire, but Petilianus used it ineptly of the flames of hell; he would have said more aptly, 'They will be burned up in eternal fires' or 'in inextinguishable flames,' for it is irrelevant whether those flames crackle or not. Now, there are divine epithets in which it is right for some reverence to be present, such as when we call the Father 'omnipotent,' 'unbegotten,' 'invisible,' 'eternal,' the Son 'wise,' the Spirit 'holy'; these will be discussed in their place.[690]

So much for figures, which contribute to the vigour and gravity of language, even if there are some among them that are conducive to other advantages as well. But metaphor, together with its kin, will be deferred to last place,[691] since it embraces every kind of excellence within itself; at this point we will indicate the ones that render language pleasant, clear, and impressive.

Traductio[692] contributes more to the wit of language than to its forcefulness or gravity; it is effected in various ways when the same word is elegantly repeated at any position in the sentence. The first of these occurs if the same word is repeated in the same sense, for example, 'Whoever loves something besides God loves God less, because he is not loving because of God,' the second when it is the same sound that is repeated, but in a different sense. A serious address hardly admits this one; for instance, 'Shun [*vita*] the man who has placed all his hope in this life [*vita*],' 'Scorn the things of this world [*mundi*], in which there is nothing clean [*mundi*]; take care [*cura*] of those who free you from every care [*cura*].' The third is cleverer, when the same word is not in fact ambiguous of itself but is twisted into a different meaning; the Greeks calls this ἀνταπόκλασις [bending back]. An example: Proculeius was complaining that his son was waiting for his father's death,[693] and when his son had replied, 'But I'm not waiting for it,' the father said, 'No, I'm asking you to wait for it.' One who is longing and hoping

* * * * *

689 Virgil *Georgics* 1.85: *Atque levem stipulam crepitantibus urere flammis* 'Often, too, it has been useful to fire barren fields, and burn the light stubble in crackling flames.'

690 See book 4.

691 See 871–6, 930–2, 960 below.

692 For *traductio* 'transplacement,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.14.20: 'Transplacement makes it possible for the same word to be frequently reintroduced . . .' The term is used in two ways: The repetition of a word for rhetorical effect and punning on two words with the same *vox*, ie with the same sound.

693 Quintilian provides this example at 9.3.68.

for a man's death is *waiting for* it: so is one who is taking no action before the man's death but is content to see that he is alive. The fourth method, when the same word is echoed, has somewhat more dignity; the Greeks call it παρηχία [*parêkhia*],[694] in Latin you could say *assonantia*, because it repeats a sound like an echo, as in Paul, 'To whom a tax, a tax; to whom a tribute, a tribute; to whom honour, honour.'[695]

Akin to this is *adnominatio*,[696] in Greek προσονομασία, when a word is repeated not in the same form but changed to some extent, either by the addition or subtraction of a letter or syllable or by the lengthening or shortening of a vowel or by changing the case.[697] An example of this first will be *Diligendus est quem diligas* [Someone to cherish must be chosen],[698] likewise, *Videte, patres conscripti, ne circumscripti videamini* [See to it, conscript fathers, that you are not circumscribed],[699] again *Sit divus, modo ne vivus* [Let him be a god, as long as he's not alive],[700] and Cicero jokes about a farm [*fundus*] that

* * * * *

694 Although there is no such word as παρηχία in LSJ or TLG, there are two Greek words Erasmus likely has in mind: παρηχέομαι, meaning 'resemble in sound' and παρήχημα, meaning a 'succession of similar sounds, alliteration.' See LSJ 1339. Hermogenes uses the term παρήχησις; see Περὶ εὑρέσεως 4.7.2: Παρήχησις δέ ἐστι κάλλος ὁμοίων ὀνομάτων ἐν διαφόρῳ γνώσει ταὐτὸν ἠχούντων. See *Hermogenes Opera* ed H. Rabe in *Rhetores Graeci* VI (Leipzig 1913) 194.

695 Rom 13:7. Chomarat (ASD V-5 133 568n) maintains that Erasmus errs in assigning the term 'assonance' to this passage, arguing it is rather a *traductio*, for it takes up the same word whose sense is unchanged. The text supports Chomarat's observation about *traductio* in the Latin text, but the Greek text solidly supports Erasmus' observation on assonance; Rom 13:7: ἀπόδοτε πᾶσιν τὰς ὀφειλάς, τῷ τὸν φόρον τὸν φόρον, τῷ τὸ τέλος τὸ τέλος, τῷ τὸν φόβον τὸν φόβον, τῷ τὴν τιμὴν τὴν τιμήν. For *traductio* see Lausberg §§647, 658–9. The term *assonantia* does not appear in Lausberg and does not appear as a noun in OLD, though the verb *assonare* does (Ovid *Metamorphoses* 3.507): 'To sound in accompaniment, respond, reply' and 'to sing as an accompaniment.' Chomarat queries whether this word is Erasmus' creation or one used among rhetoricians of his day.

696 For *adnominatio*, see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.21.29. Erasmus gives προσονομασία as the Greek equivalent of *adnominatio*. The translator of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* renders *adnominatio* as paronomasia in English. See Cicero *De oratore* 2.63.256; Quintilian 9.3.66–7; and Lausberg §§637–9.

697 For other examples of *adnominatio* in the ancient writers, see Quintilian 9.3.66–7.

698 The Latin verbs *diligere* 'cherish' and *deligere* 'choose' differ by only one letter. Cf *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.21.29.

699 'Conscript fathers' is a formal term for 'senators.' See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.22.30 and Quintilian 9.3.72.

700 See Aelius Spartianus *Antoninus Geta* in *Scriptores historiae augustae* trans David Magie, Loeb Classical Library 140 (Cambridge, Mass and London 1924; 1993) 36–7: *Sit divus, dum non sit vivus* (II:8–9).

could be shot from a sling [*funda*].[701] Nevertheless these too have a certain grace when they occur[702] naturally and in an appropriate context, for example, if someone should say that those who flatter stupid rich people for profit are *arrisores* [smilers] in the sense that they are also *irrisores* [mockers] and *arrosores* [gobblers].[703] This of the second: 'Furia, why should I not call you a fury?'[704] 'Furia' with a long first syllable is a woman's name,[705] whence they are also called 'Fusii,' with the *r* changed to *s*.[706] Likewise, 'He does not love the curia as much as he loves Curia.'[707] 'Curia' with the first syllable short is the name of a prostitute.[708] Let this be an example of the third:[709] 'You have a most indulgent father. This father's love should have invited you to obedience; it would not be burdensome to oblige a father whose instructions are so just. It would be fair to love in return so loving a father. One should not have disagreed with so kindly a father.'[710] This kind of *adnominatio*, which the Greeks call πολύπτωτον [*polyptôton*], is scarcely appropriate for someone

* * * * *

701 Here the wordplay is on *fundus* 'farm' and *funda* 'sling.' See Quintilian 8.6.73.

702 Chomarat's text (ASD V-5 134:577) gives *indicunt*, which would give a meaning like 'when they appropriately proclaim things not affected'; I have assumed this to be an error for *incidunt* 'occur,' and translate accordingly. (Translator's note)

703 See Seneca *Epistulae morales* 27.7. The joke comes from those who fawn upon the rich and eat their food – and then make fun of them behind their back.

704 Quintilian attributes this saying to Ovid; see Quintilian 9.3.70.

705 The Latin for 'Fury' is also *furia*, with a short *u*. (Translator's note)

706 See Quintilian 1.4.13, who notes that 'time has brought about [changes] even in nominatives . . . names like Valesius and Fusius have become Valerius and Furius . . .' Chomarat notes that Erasmus has the linguistic change backward; see ASD V-5 135 581n.

707 For 'curia,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.21.29.

708 With a long *u* it is the curia, the meeting place of the Roman Senate. (Translator's footnote)

709 For this example, see Quintilian 9.3.36–7: 'This figure may be effected solely by change of cases, a proceeding which the Greeks call πολύπτωτον.' Chomarat notes that this is not, properly speaking, *adnominatio* because here it deals with the same thing (*res*) and not dissimilar things; ASD V-5 135 586n.

710 'Est tibi pater indulgentissimus. Patris huius charitas te debuit ad obsequium invitare, patri tam aequa praecipienti non erat grave morigerum esse.' 'Sic amantem patrem par erat redamare.' 'A tam benevolo patre non oportuit dissentire.' Chomarat, following the editions, punctuates 'You have . . . kindly a father' as three separate quotations: 'You have . . . are so just,' 'It would be . . . loving a father,' and 'One should . . . kindly a father'; ASD V-5 134:582–6. In this arrangement, however, only the first quotation illustrates the figure discussed, because only it contains a word used in more than one of its case forms (*pater, Patris, patri*). (Translator's note)

dealing with serious matters, especially if it is contrived, and it should be avoided even if one encounters it often.

No less flat are words with similar declensional forms and similar endings; the former are called ὁμοιόπτωτα in Greek, the latter ὁμοιοτέλευτα, because the former occur in words that vary according to case, the latter in the rest, with of course a word designating a genus used in place of a species.[711] An example of the former sort will be 'The man who hates *industria* [industry] will never enjoy *sapientia* [wisdom],[712] this of the latter: 'It is difficult *sapere* [to be wise] and *amare* [to love] at the same time.'[713] This figure becomes more striking if it is enhanced by antithesis, repetition, *conversio*, *adnominatio*, and other such things.

St Augustine took remarkable delight in these even in his serious sermons, whether because he was speaking to an African audience that enjoyed a highly coloured style more than seriousness (Apuleius' *Florida* shows this) or because people at that time were so exacting that they demanded even from a bishop's sermons the delight that Tacitus complains was demanded in his age even by judges.[714] And in fact the preacher must strive to hold his listener with some pleasure, but he must ensure that the entertainment accompanying the usefulness is not extraneous to the theme, but is worthy of a Christian address;[715] otherwise it seems to me ridiculous to affect in evangelical addresses what used to be derided in the declamations of the pagans.

But such mannerisms, consisting of *isocola*,[716] words with similar endings,[717] and *adnominationes*, crept into education when that natural kind of

* * * * *

711 See Quintilian 9.3.77–9.

712 In the Latin the figure is represented by the similar endings of *sapientia* and *industria*. Cf *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.20.28. (Translator's note)

713 Here the similar endings are in *sapere* and *amare*. See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.20.28.

714 See Tacitus *Dialogus de oratoribus* 20.3: 'The general audience, too, and the casual listeners who flock in and out, have come now to insist on a flowery and ornamental style of speaking [*exigere laetitiam et pulchritudinem orationis*].'

715 Cf Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.28.61: 'In his speech itself he [the teacher] should prefer to please more with the things said than with the words used to speak them . . .' See, too, 4.12.27, where Augustine quotes Cicero *Orator* (21.69): '. . . He who is eloquent should speak in such a way that he teaches, delights, and moves. Then he [Cicero] added, "To teach is a necessity, to please is a sweetness, to persuade is a victory."'

716 For isocola (*compar*), see L&S: 'A figure of speech whereby several members of a period have an equal number of syllables.' See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.20.27.

717 Also referred to as paronomasia.

speaking had already degenerated, so that we see that even the books of the Roman pontiff St Gregory roll on through a series of such figures, punctuated by clauses, rounded with periods, and chime with similar endings.[718] Since scholars liked echo, is it any wonder that Ausonius played with centos, monosyllables, and other childish nonsense?[719] It finally reached a point where nothing was considered elegant unless bound up in rhythmical units with similar endings.

St Augustine was not averse to these, to such an extent that he completed whole books in these figures and speaks in this way when defending the Catholic faith against the Jews: 'It is you, I say, I come to see, oh Jews who to this day deny the Son of God.'[720] Nor is this an infrequent practice of his, especially in the tracts and homilies in which he deals with the people, for he wrote a psalm against the Donatists to be chanted to the masses.[721] Certain things of this sort are attributed to him, such as the hymn on the glory of paradise in the book of *Meditations*;[722] whether they are his I do not know.

Rhetoricians say that figures of this sort reduce the speaker's credibility and that the pleasure that they impart soon becomes tiresome,[723] but every day we hear in the churches, 'Let us raise the praises of the cross, we who exult in the special glory of the cross,'[724] etc; and we hear them

* * * * *

718 On the Latin prose style of Gregory the Great, see: Sister Kathleen Brazzel *The Clausulae in the Works of St. Gregory the Great* Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Latin Language and Literature 11 (Washington, DC 1939). The author takes a far more favourable stance towards Gregory's style than does Erasmus. See also Mary Borromeo Dunn *The Style of the Letters of St. Gregory the Great* The Catholic University of America Patristic Studies 23 (Washington, DC 1931).

719 Ausonius: Decimus Magnus Ausonius (b AD c 310–d c 395), *grammaticus* and later *rhetor* who taught at Bordeaux, tutor of Gratian, governor of Gaul and other provinces, and later consul. Ausonius was author of many epigrams and letters; his best known work is the poem *Mosella* (*The Moselle*), which describes the bounty and blessings of the river in Gaul.

720 Pseudo-Augustine *Sermo contra Iudaeos, Paganos et Arianos* PL 42 1123: *Vos, inquam, convenio, o Iudaei qui in hodiernum diem negatis Filium Dei*. Chomarat notes that the words 'Jews' (*Iudaei*) and 'God' (*dei*) supply the rhyme; ASD V-5 137 615–16n. And assonance: *convenio o hodiernum . . .; Iudaei qui*.

721 See Augustine *Psalmus contra partem Donati* in *Traités anti-Donatistes* I trans G. Finaert, Bibliotheque Augustinienne 28 (Paris 1963–8).

722 The *Rhythmus de gloria paradisi* (*Hymn on the Glory of Paradise*) is by Pseudo-Augustine; see *Meditationes* PL 40 (1865) 901–42.

723 See Quintilian 9.4.42–3, and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.22.32–4.23.32.

724 The lines are from Adam of Saint-Victor's *Laudes crucis attollamus* (*On Finding of the Holy Cross*) *Anal. hymnica* 54 188–92: *Laudes crucis attollamus / Nos,*

for hours on end without their being tiresome, especially since many are *prosae* [proses], as they call them, foolish both in their sentiments and in their words, and rhythms are observed in these to the neglect of syllabic quantities. But however much this is tolerated elsewhere, it would be quite foolish if a preacher should now try to speak before a congregation that way in the vulgar tongue, lest he seem to imitate those foolish people who call themselves 'rhetorists.'[725]

Ratiocinatio, which the Greeks call διαλογισμός [*dialogismos*],[726] is most appropriate for a preacher when he is speaking before an uneducated congregation, inasmuch as it stimulates concentration, and it is appropriate for receptiveness to learning and renders an address clear, even lively, and not unattractive. It occurs when we ask ourselves questions and respond to the questions ourselves as though there were two persons conversing.

That most eloquent man Chrysostom made considerable use of this figure, Augustine even more, at any rate, in the sermons that they delivered before the people in expounding Scripture. I shall adduce one of the countless instances as an example to enable the reader to understand what I mean; I shall adduce it moreover from the commentaries on Psalm 30.[727] '"They have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge."[728] What is this that he has said, "The Jews have zeal for God but not according to knowledge"?

* * * * *

qui crucis exultamus / Speciali gloria. Erasmus would have been familiar with this sequence because it was the most commonly used sequence for the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross; Josse Clichtove's (*explanator*) comments on it appeared as *Elucidatorium ecclesiasticum: ad officium Ecclesiae pertinentia planius exponens, & quatuor libros complectens ...* (Basel: Ioannes Froben 1519) 196.

725 Below Erasmus refers to common peddlers of rhetorical skills as *vulgares rhetoristae*; see 868. See Chomarat's note on this term; ASD V-5 137 627n.

726 For ratiocination 'reasoning by question and answer,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.16.23–4. Chomarat notes Erasmus' confusion in equating ratiocination with the Greek term *dialogismos* (διαλογισμός), since the Greek term denotes constructing a fictive dialogue with another person or among other persons. Erasmus likely meant 'sermocinatio,' as the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.52.65 defines it: 'Dialogue [*sermocinatio*] consists in assigning to some person language which as set forth conforms with his character ...' See also Quintilian 9.2.31–2. Chomarat (ASD V-5 137 629n) notes that the simple confusion can be clarified easily: *ratiocinatio* is a dialogue with oneself; *sermocinatio* is 'a fictive dialogue with an imaginary person' (or persons).

727 See Augustine *Exposition 2 of Psalm 30* WSA III-15 326.

728 Augustine cites Rom 10:2, using the word *zelus* for the Vulgate's *aemulatio*. The Greek New Testament, however, uses 'zeal' (ζῆλος).

Hear what "not according to knowledge" is, and then "Who is it that is not saved by grace? The one in whom the saviour finds nothing to crown but something to condemn," and a little later, "For all have sinned and lack the glory of God."[729] What is "lack the glory of God"? That he sets free, not you. Because you cannot free yourself, you need a liberator. What is it that you boast? What is it that you presume about law and justice?'

Moreover, this figure is applied in a variety of ways: when we propose a question for ourselves, or when we represent another proposing it, or when we demand a response from our listeners or from another person that we invent, sometimes from the very author that we are interpreting. An example of the first form will be, 'Do these not seem to be openly in conflict? And yet Scripture does not conflict with Scripture, just as that Spirit, by whose inspiration it was produced, does not conflict with itself. How then will we undo this knot? That will be quite easy to do if we distinguish according to time,' etc, likewise Paul, 'What then? Is the Law sin? Heaven forbid, but I do not know sin,'[730] etc. This of the second: 'Here someone will make to us the objection, "If it is lawful to swear, why has Christ forbidden it so precisely?" '[731] This of the third: 'Come, dearest ones; seek with me, knock with me. What does the Holy Spirit mean in this passage,'[732] etc, likewise, 'I make you the judges of this case: is this an affront against God or not?'; some call this *communicatio* [consultation]. The following of the fourth: 'What answer do you have to make to this, Jew? You will interpret the Scripture in reference to David, not to Christ; but the facts themselves reject your interpretation. The tomb of David,[733] dead so many years, survives and contains his bones; but show me, if you can, the bones of Christ,' etc. Chrysostom does this often: 'What are you up to here, Paul? Earlier you gave those teachings, now you seem to be saying something quite different,'[734] and no less often Augustine, such as on Psalm 31, 'But let us set Paul

* * * * *

729 Rom 3:23
730 Rom 7:7
731 Cf Matt 5:33–7.
732 Cf Matt 7:7; Luke 11:9. See *Paraphrasis in Lucam 11–24* CWE 48 8–9.
733 Cf 1 Kings 2:10.
734 See eg John Chrysostom *In epistolam ad Romanos homilia 1* PG 60 (1862) 397; *Homily 1 (Rom 1:1–2). The Epistle to the Romans* NPNF 1st series 11 340: 'What dost, thou, O Paul, that after lifting up our souls so, and elevating them, and causing great and unutterable things to pass in show before them, and speaking of the Gospel, and that too the Gospel of God, and bringing in the chorus of the Prophets, and showing the whole of them heralding forth many years before those things which were to come: why dost thou again bring us

himself against Paul and say to him, "But you seem somehow to allow us to sin without punishment when you say, "Abraham believed God," etc, and then, "Listen to yourself, Paul," etc, then he makes the Apostle reply, "This is the reason why I said this to you, O man."'[735]

Interrogatio, *subiectio*, and *sermocinatio* somewhat resemble this figure.[736] They have charm when they are applied in their place but only if applied with moderation. Moreover, whatever you add to Augustine, at least when he disputed before the people, will be immoderate. It is not appropriate to apply these figures when the sentiment contains no emotion or difficulty.

I heard someone who asked the question what physical appearance we will have in the resurrection, then turned his face and words to the crucifix that separates the choir from the lower church; drawing his hood back a little from his brow, he said 'What do you say, good sir: will we rise again as we are now?' There happened to be some monks of that monastery present, little more than boys, for a Dominican doctor was preaching in a church of the Benedictines. 'See how small they are,' he said; 'Surely they will not be tiny when they rise again?' These things and others more feeble than these he spoke to the crucifix. Then he composed his face and responded, as if on Christ's behalf, 'Brother, you ask a lot of questions.' This use of dialogue was tasteless and foolish in more ways than one.

The person who most shamelessly, and indeed impiously, contaminated Jerome's commentaries on Psalms often affects this kind of figure,[737] imitating Augustine of course, frequently cramming in, 'See what he is saying'[738] though the subject demands no particular attention; he is doubly

* * * * *

down to David? Art thou conversing, oh tell me, of some man, and giving him Jesse's son for a father? And wherein are these things worthy of what thou hast just spoken of?'

735 Augustine *Enarratio in psalmos* 31(2).6–7 CCSL 38 229:3–5, 230:5, *Exposition 2 of Psalm 31* WSA III-15 368–70. Erasmus greatly abbreviates Augustine's exposition.

736 See above for Erasmus' treatment of interrogation (*interrogatio*), 756–7, 818; for 'subjection' (*subiectio*), see 822 above; for 'sermocination' (*sermocinatio*; or 'dialogue'), see 842 and n726; and see Quintilian 9.3.98. Note that the figure *subiectio* is different from the *subiectio* treated by Quintilian in 2.18.28 and 4.17.24. See also *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.23.33.

737 For the problem of spurious works attributed to Jerome that Erasmus encountered, see the editor's introduction to CWE 61 xxvi–xxviii.

738 Observe 'see what he is saying' (*Vide quid dicat*): Augustine uses this phrase frequently; see eg his *Expositions of the Psalms*, *Exposition of Psalm 94* WSA III-15 410. The CLCLT database yields a number of hits for this phrase in Augustine's writings.

foolish, both because he applies it rashly where there is no need and because, though he has assumed Jerome's identity, he does not notice that this kind of language is not customary to Jerome and does not belong at all in commentaries,[739] which are written for scholars, though it would be appropriate to one speaking before a congregation.

Contrarium [contrary][740] differs from *contentio* [contention][741] in that in the former contraries are set against contraries for the sake of forcefulness, in the latter it is done for the sake of proof when we argue by comparison.[742] Accordingly, this contrary either is not a figure or else is the same as *contentio*; otherwise every suitable inference[743] would have to be a figure. Such is that phrase in the Gospel, 'If you do not believe me when I speak of earthly things, how will you believe me when I speak to you of heavenly things?'[744]

Continuatio [period],[745] akin to this, is not a figure but either a statement or an argument; if it is brief or clear or otherwise unexceptional, it does not immediately count as a figure.

Because it is not a simple form of argument, *subiectio* [746] is properly accounted among the figures. Remove the fact that the same person asks and replies; it will merely be an argument. For example, if you were to say, 'Since the wealth that that man possesses came neither from his patrimony (for his father's property was sold) nor from his inheritance (since he was disinherited by all his relatives) nor from his industry (since he is quite

* * * * *

739 Actually Jerome uses the phrase *Vide quid dicat* often in his *Tractatus LIX in psalmos*; see especially *Tractatus de psalmo CXVIIII* CCSL 78 246–61, where the phrase occurs six times (lines 129, 130, 241, 267, 324, 330). Overall, the CLCLT database lists thirty-three occurrences of *Vide quid dicat*, generally only once, if at all, in a psalm (twice in two instances); it also occurs in three of his sermons and in one homily.

740 For 'contrary' (reasoning by contraries), see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.18.25. Cf Cicero *De inventione* 1.28.42; Quintilian 9.3.90.

741 For 'contention,' see 839 above.

742 For 'comparison,' see book 3 passim.

743 For 'inference' (*collectio*), see Quintilian 9.2.103: '*Inference* (*collectio*), which Gorgias [a contemporary of Cicero, not Gorgias of Leontini] terms *συλλογισμός* . . .'

744 John 3:12

745 For 'continuation' ('period'), see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.19.27: 'A Period is a close-packed and uninterrupted group of words embracing a complete thought.'

746 For *subiectio* (*hypophora*), see Quintilian 9.3.98 and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.23.33. For 'subjection,' see 822 and 854 above.

lazy) nor from a gift (since he has not one friend), it remains that he gained it by wicked means,'[747] it is a simple argument by division.[748] But if you were to express it as, 'I ask you: whence did he obtain his wealth? Was an ample patrimony left to him? But his father's property was sold. Did some inheritance come his way? It cannot be said; rather he was disinherited by all his relatives,' etc, in this way it finally becomes a figured argument, but by a different figure.

One type of *subiectio* is *communicatio* [consultation],[749] which we mentioned above, whenever we deliberate, as it were, with judges or listeners; for example, 'What would each one of you have done in this state of things, or what would you have thought I should have done? Should I have refused the office that the prince had determined to impose? I would have provoked the prince's anger against myself. Should I have undertaken it? I was not equal to such a burden, and this sort of business did not suit my talent. Should I have pleaded my age, ill health, lack of experience? Monarchs do not listen to excuses when they desire something intensely. But come now; imagine that I was equal to the business, imagine that I undertook it. What could I do? Should I have been obedient to my colleagues? I would have been cruel towards those whom I judged innocent. Should I have opposed my colleagues? I would have cast myself into the same danger as those who were being dragged off for punishment. I did the one thing that I could: I emigrated.' If this figure is to be applied intelligently, it contributes not only to clarity but also to forcefulness.

Gradatio, in Greek κλῖμαξ [ladder],[750] adds much grace and pleasantness. It occurs whenever a speech is marked off through steps in such a way that the word that ends one section begins the following one. An example from Virgil is: 'You will make these very great for Gallus, / Gallus, whose love,' etc,[751] and '. . . the most beautiful of young men, Astur, / Astur trusting in his horse. / The fierce lioness follows the wolf, the wolf himself the she-goat.' These are more pleasant than serious, but what Ausonius affected in his *Technopaegnia* [*Monosyllables*] is too feeble: 'Fragile human affairs are nourished and ruled and destroyed by chance, / Chance doubtful

* * * * *

747 Erasmus takes this example from *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.23.33.

748 For 'division,' see book 2 passim.

749 For 'communication,' see 826 and 853 above.

750 For 'gradation' (κλῖμαξ), or English 'ladder,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.25.34 and Quintilian 9.3.54–7.

751 Virgil *Eclogues* 10.72–3. Chomarat notes that this example is not one of *gradatio* but a simple repetition of words (ASD V-5 141 723–4n).

and forever unsteady.'[752] But *gradatio* contributes to forcefulness as well when it is effected through *correctio* [correction], as in Cicero's example, 'Yet he is alive. Alive? Yes, and even comes into the Senate.'[753]

This type of affectation will give less offence if the subject itself has steps, such as in genealogies or in a series of magistrates succeeding each other, and also in narratives: 'For Scipio Africanus his industry won him courage, his courage glory, his glory rivals,'[754] likewise, 'Spring is driven off by the summer, summer is succeeded by autumn, autumn by winter,' 'Childhood is followed by adolescence, adolescence by youth, youth by manhood, manhood by old age, old age by death, death by immortality,' likewise, 'Carelessness produced error, error a lapse, lapse an offence, offence a habit, habit shamelessness, shamelessness a base mind, a base mind despair.'[755] There is a similar example in Paul: 'The head of a woman is a man, of a man the head is Christ, but of Christ God.'[756] But it is remarkable how much the evangelist John delighted in this figure: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word,'[757] and then, 'Without him nothing was made. What was made was life in him, and the life was the light of men, and the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.'[758]

There is, however, some value in this figure for forcefulness if it is employed with amplification, as, for example, 'You killed a friend; a friend, I say, you killed, and you killed him not with the sword but with poison, with the poison moreover that is the most effective of all, that of a tongue, a tongue imbued with the poison of Tartarus.'[759]

Definitio [definition][760] is not a figure of itself; otherwise every definition, however so correct, would be a figure. For when we say, 'Justice is

* * * * *

752 Ausonius *Technopaegnion* 3.1–2.

753 Cicero *In Catilinam* I (*The First Speech Against Lucius Sergius Catilina*) 1.2. For 'correction,' see 822–3, 828 above.

754 This example is found in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.25.34 and Quintilian 9.3.56.

755 Cf Rom 1:28.

756 1 Cor 11:3

757 John 1:1. It is clear from the *Annotationes* that Erasmus understood the meaning to be 'and the Word was God.' But the statement here is correct at the rhetorical level since *deus* comes before *verbum*. This distinction between word order and meaning cannot be brought out in English. (A. Dalzell)

758 John 1:3–5

759 Erasmus uses similar examples above; see 755, 780.

760 For 'definition,' see book 2 passim; see also *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.25.35: 'Definition in brief and clear-cut fashion grasps the characteristic qualities of a thing . . .' Cf Quintilian 9.3.65.

a virtue by which we assign to each what is owed,' there is no figure; but when we say, 'Adolescence is the bloom of life,' it is a metaphor, just like 'Old age is the winter of life.' Again, if you should say, 'Loving in such a way that you do harm is not kindness but thoughtlessness,' there is *correctio*; but by this reasoning every statement and every kind of argument could be included among figures.

Transitio [transition],[761] which calls to mind what has been said and briefly shows what is going to be said, is suited to someone who is teaching; this was discussed when we spoke about division. In the treatise *De copia* we showed how many forms it has.[762]

Commutatio [reciprocal change][763] has considerable charm by inverting the order of a statement: 'One should not live to eat but eat to live,' likewise, 'It is not the one who is a slave to money that possesses money but the one whom money serves.'[764] Such is the example from the Gospel, 'Not man because of the sabbath but the sabbath because of man,'[765] again the example of the Spartan woman who, when asked whether she had approached her husband, said, 'No, but he has approached me.'[766] The justly admired sentiment, 'If you do something disgraceful with pleasure, the pleasure departs, the disgracefulness remains; if you do something honourable with effort, the effort departs, the honourableness remains'[767] is similar.

Circuitio [circuition][768] in Greek *periphrasis*, gives roundabout expression to a single word through several, sometimes for the sake of decoration, as in: 'It was the time when for ailing mortals first rest / Begins, and by divine gift slips on most pleasingly.'[769] He means the beginning of night. Likewise, the following from the same author: 'See, the bullocks bear back the ploughs hung from the yoke / And from the lofty mountains the shadows

* * * * *

761 For *transitio* 'transition,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.26.35.

762 See *De copia* (53 Phrases to operate transitions) CWE 24 410.

763 For *commutatio* 'reciprocal change,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.28.39: 'Reciprocal Change occurs when two discrepant throughts are so expressed by transposition that the latter follows from the former although contradictory to it . . .' Cf Quintilian 9.3.85.

764 Cf Horace *Epistles* 1.10.47: 'Money stored up is for each his lord or his slave . . .'; and Seneca *De beata vita* 26.1: '. . . in the eyes of a wise man riches are a slave, in the eyes of fools a master . . .'

765 Mark 2:27

766 See Plutarch *Apophthegmata Laconica* 242.25C.

767 See Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 16.1.2, who recollects this saying of Musonius. Erasmus reverses the two components of the sentiment.

768 For *circuitio* 'circuition,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.32.43.

769 Virgil *Aeneid* 2.268–9

fall larger, / And far away the farmhouse rooftops smoke.'[770] He has used all these words to give roundabout expression to 'evening.'

Sometimes we use roundabout expressions for the sake of modesty, the way that Sallust said, 'in accordance with nature's needs,'[771] and we say, 'relieve the belly' instead of 'shit' and 'pass urine' instead of 'piss,' though sometimes the periphrasis is more obscene than the plain word.

Sometimes it also contributes to the dignity of language, such as, 'Father of gods and king of mankind'[772] in the poets for Jupiter; 'prince of Roman eloquence' for Cicero; and for Paul we say 'teacher of the gentiles.'

Distributio [distribution],[773] which assigns what is appropriate to individual persons or things, if accompanied by appropriate brevity, adds no small adornment to language, especially when establishing principles; for example, 'It is for a prince to look out for the whole state, for the leading men to assist the prince in his anxious concerns with helpful advice, for the magistrates to conduct in good faith the office imposed on them. It is for the people to obey faithfully the commands of the prince and of the magistrates, for the bishops to promote in every way what contributes to godliness, for the monks to entreat the Lord on behalf of all'; likewise, 'It is for the husband to cherish his wife and guide her with his gentle command; it is for the wife to obey her husband reverently.[774] It is for the master to treat his slaves as men, not as animals; it is for slaves to fear their masters and obey their word. It is for a father to train his children lovingly; it is for children to obey their parents' commands sincerely.' Such is the passage of the Apostle at Romans 12, 'Who gives discreetly, who leads with care, who shows compassion with cheerfulness,'[775] likewise in the Epistle of John, chapter 2, 'I write to you, fathers,'[776] etc.

The charm of the figure is doubled if another figure is added; for example, 'Talent is corrupted by leisure, grows and increases by industry,' 'Frugality preserves property, luxury wastes it,' 'Riches teach arrogance; poverty

* * * * *

770 Virgil *Eclogues* 2.66, 1.83 and 82.

771 Cited by Quintilian 8.6.59. See Sallust *Historiarum reliquiae (in aliis scriptis servatae)* (Stuttgart 1893) 201 (*ad requisita naturae*).

772 Virgil *Aeneid* 1.65

773 For 'distribution,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.35.47: '. . . occurs when certain specified roles are assigned among a number of things or persons . . .' In his example that follows, Erasmus modifies one of the *Rhetorica*'s examples of distribution to fit the government of Christian society.

774 Cf Eph 5:25–33, 6:1–9.

775 Rom 12:8

776 1 John 2:13

is the teacher of modesty,' 'Inexperience produces confidence; knowledge makes people fearful,' 'Rituals nourish superstition; faith and love nourish devotion.'

Notatio [character delineation],[777] which in Greek is called ἠθοποιία[778] because it depicts everyone's character and talent in its own colours, brings very great delight, for instance, if you were to paint a picture of a person devoted to luxury, a spendthrift, a miser, a lover, a prostitute,[779] a flatterer, a legacy hunter, a drunkard, a boaster, or someone who is ambitious or jealous or irascible or envious or superstitious or a show-off, someone who wants to be considered learned though he is not, rich though he is not, noble though he is not, or holy though he is not. It is impossible for an example of this figure to be rendered conveniently except in many words. There is a great abundance of examples in comedy and tragedy, and not a few in Cicero. There are certain *Characters* in circulation under the name of Theophrastus, not entirely negligible but hardly worthy of such a great author.[780] But the preacher must temper his language everywhere so that he is seen to be attacking the vices themselves rather than persons.

Sermocinatio [dialogue],[781] which invents speech that fits neatly with the character of each person – a brave man, a woman, a tyrant, an old man, a child, an adult – is, if it is done skilfully, really a quality of good narrative. I do not see why it should be called a figure of speech. Moreover, it is a

* * * * *

777 For *notatio* 'notation,' 'character delineation,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.50.63: '[Notation] consists in describing a person's character by the definite signs which, like distinctive marks, are attributes of that character.' See also Quintilian 9.2.58: 'The imitation of other persons' characteristics, which is styled ἠθοποιία or, as some prefer, μίμησις, may be counted among the devices which serve to excite the gentler emotions.'

778 Literally 'making ἦθη' or 'making characters.'

779 The concerns about the text, which have led Chomarat to suggest *amantis meretricis* 'the lover of a prostitute' or *amantis meretrices* 'who makes love to prostitutes' are unfounded; see ASD V-5 145 806n. The prostitute, along with the lover (*amans*) and everyone else in this list, is simply one of the human types whose 'character and talent' can be depicted through 'notation.'

780 Theophrastus (c 370–288 or 5 BC) of Eresos was a disciple of Aristotle and carried on his master's legacy as a researcher and head of the Peripatetics. Erasmus refers here to Theophrastus' *Characters*, which became a useful text for rhetorical exercises in describing abnormal types of behaviour. For background and text, see Theophrastus *Characters* ed, trans, introduction, and commentary James Diggle (Cambridge 2004).

781 For *sermocinatio*, see 852–5 above.

division of *notatio* inasmuch as it devises a language while the other devises a character; each belongs to *hypotyposis*,[782] which embraces all the parts.

I see that those ancient writers, though devout, gave themselves some licence in devising speeches, making people say not what was truly said but what could have been said.[783] For example, in the histories of the seven Maccabees a speech is assigned to each of the young men and to their mother, not because they used these words but because they could have used such or similar words; the evidence is that they speak differently in the books of Maccabees and in Josephus.[784] Nor is it likely that the conversations that Ambrose attributes to Agnes, her suitor,[785] and the tyrant took place among them. Some who have published the lives of saints, such as Paul the Hermit,[786] Anthony,[787] Hilarion,[788] and Malchus,[789] have allowed themselves the same licence. I leave it to others to determine how far they think this example should be imitated.

* * * * *

782 For *hypotyposis*, see 807, 838, 843–5.

783 See eg Thucydides' statement on his practice of assigning speeches to the actors in his *Peloponnesian War* 1.22.1.

784 The speeches of the mother and brothers Maccabee occur in 2 Macc 7 (4 Macc 8–18). For background on the text and analysis of the speeches, see Robert Doran *2 Maccabees: A Critical Commentary* ed Harold W. Attridge (Minneapolis 2012); for Josephus' speeches, see *Bellum Iudaicum*: eg 2.345–401 (Agrippa's speech to dissuade the Jews from war), 4.162–92 (Ananus' speech), 4.241–65 (Jeshua's speech), 5.375–420 (Josephus' speech before the seige of Jerusalem), 6.34–53 (Titus' speech before the seige of Jesusalem), 6.99–110 (Josephus on the prophecy concerning Jerusalem's destruction), 6.327–50 (Titus' speech to the vanquished), 7.323–88 (Eleazar's speech before the self-slaughter of the defenders of Masada).

785 The account of Agnes' martyrdom is found in Pseudo-Ambrose PL 17 (1845) 813. See 'Agnes' ODS 7. See also *Legenda aurea* 1:101–4.

786 Erasmus edited the complete works of Jerome, published by Froben in 1516 (*Omnium operum divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis*). Volume I included the lives of Paul the Hermit, St Hilarion the Hermit, and Malchus, the Captive Monk. See Jerome's *Vita Pauli eremitae* (*Life of Paul, the First Hermit*) I 106 verso–109 recto; NPNF 2nd series 6 299–303.

787 Athanasius *Vita Antonii* (*Life of Antony*) PG 26 837–976; NPNF 2nd series 4 187–221. St Augustine mentions reading the work (*Confessions* 8.6.15), which suggests one or more Latin translations were available shortly after Athanasius wrote the work. See David M. Gwynn *Athanasius of Alexandria: Bishop, Theologian, Ascetic, Father* (Oxford and New York 2012) 130.

788 See Jerome *Vita Hilarionis eremitae* (*The Life of St Hilarion*), *Omnium operum* I 109 verso–116 verso; NPNF 2nd series 6 303–15.

789 Jerome *De vita Malchi captivi monachi* (*The Life of Malchus, The Captive Monk*), *Omnium operum* I 116 recto–117 verso; NPNF 2nd series 6 315–8.

In religious narratives I should not want anything to be invented, though I have heard this done even by some preachers. They invented the words in which Herod addressed Christ,[790] the words with which Pilate pronounced his sentence,[791] what Christ's soul addressed to the various circles of the dead, and what reply those detained there gave to him.[792] He[793] used a similar fiction to lay the final judgment before their eyes, for he was endowed with a certain natural eloquence. I listened to these things with a certain pleasure, but as a child.

Doing this is more excusable if the preacher states first that such things were a traditional feature of secular histories or that it is a likely conjecture that such and such was said or would be said. Some call them pious speculations (and, in fact, they are) if we imagine what best befits persons and circumstances. We frequently note carelessness in this regard in saints' lives. For example, Sulpicius in his life of Martin makes him respond to the emperor, 'Let someone who will be a soldier accept your donative;[794] I am a Christian and not permitted to fight.'[795] A different reason should have been adduced, for at that time it was right to fight even under a wicked emperor if he had declared a just war; if it was wrong for a Christian to fight, he should have left soldiering before his baptism and not accepted the emperor's pay. Then, so as not to seem cowardly, he does not refuse to charge unarmed through the middle of the enemy formations, that is, to do what he had professed was wrong for a Christian; the accusation of cowardice was not so important that God should have been tested to avert it.

And I don't think that he had taken sufficient account of plausibility, whoever it was that pretended on the basis of some authority (Bonaventure,[796] if I'm not mistaken) that the Virgin Mother had asked her Son not to

* * * * *

790 Cf Luke 23:8–11.

791 Cf Matt 27:24; Luke 23:24–5; John 19:16.

792 Erasmus refers here to the *descensus ad infernos*, the event which occurred after Christ expired on the cross, when he 'descended into hell'; it was then he gathered up all those waiting to be liberated and taken with him to heaven. The idea of the 'circles of hell' derives from Dante's *Inferno*. For Erasmus' comments on this 'addition' to the Creed, see *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 306–10; and 'Descent of Christ into Hell, the' ODCC 472–3.

793 Erasmus slips from plural to singular; he perhaps had a specific individual in mind but neglected to identify him. See ASD V- 5 146.

794 'Donative' (*donativum*) is a gift given to the troops by the emperor on the occasion of his accession or at other celebrations. See OLD 628 *donativum*.

795 Sulpicius Severus *Vita Martini* (*Life of Saint Martin*) (4) CSEL 1 107–37

796 St Bonaventure (1221–74) often dwells on the sufferings of the Blessed Virgin. See eg *Sermo 7. Dominica infra octavum epiphaniae* in *Sancti Bonaventurae*

die and had added, when he replied that his Father had determined otherwise, that he should at least choose a less cruel and less ignominious death than the cross; his answer was that sins were so enormous that they could not be washed away by any other death. Having experienced rejection here too, the Virgin said, 'At least turn me into stone so that I may never experience such a calamity.' It is unnecessary to point out how much absurdity, not to say blasphemy, there is in this invention; the thing speaks for itself. I myself mention this unwillingly and mention it only so that it may be avoided.

Significatio [signifying by implication],[797] which is either *emphasis* or a type of ἔμφασις [emphasis] because it indicates more to the listeners' imagination than it expresses in words, contributes considerable charm to language, sometimes a degree of dignity and forcefulness as well. This is accomplished in a variety of ways. Through hyperbole, which we have discussed as,[798] for example, in describing a spendthrift: 'From such an ample patrimony he has not even a pot left to carry fire in.'[799] Through ambiguity, such as when Cicero, upon being asked when Clodius had been killed, replied, 'Late,'[800] hinting with the equivocal word that a citizen so noxious to the state should have been removed much sooner. Through *reticentia* [reticence] which has been discussed,[801] the way that Quintilian says of children sitting in their elders' lap that he is unwilling to state what he fears, saying, 'What is understood is too much.'[802] Through *consequentia* [consequence], when what has preceded is understood from what has followed, the way that we understand from 'This man's father wipes his nose on

* * * * *

Sermones dominicales ed Jacobus Guidus Bougerol (Grottoferrata 1977) 178–85. But neither Chomarat nor I have found any passage in Bonaventure's writings that would support this imagined dialogue between the Virgin Mary and Jesus.

797 For *significatio* 'emphasis,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.53.67; and Quintilian 8.3.83 and 9.2.3, where he places emphasis under the artifice of amplification; *emphasis* is 'the gift of signifying more than we say . . .'

798 The exposition of hyperbole in this book is at 775–6 and 828–34.

799 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.53.67

800 See Quintilian 6.3.49, where he refers to Cicero's remark at the trial of Milo. The Latin word *sero* can mean 'late,' 'too late,' 'at a late hour,' 'in the evening,' etc. This question with the word *sero*, however, is not found in Cicero's *Pro Milone*; in fact, there is no occurrence of *sero* in the *Pro Milone*. See OLD 1923 *sero*.

801 See 826–7 above; *praecisio* corresponds to *aposiopesis* cited above in n548.

802 See Quintilian 1.3.17–19.

his arm'[803] that he was a seller of salt fish. Through *similitudo* [similitude]; for example, 'Dionysius at Corinth'[804] when we are secretly advising a prince not to conduct himself in such a way that he is driven from his realm; such is Jerome's phrase to Augustine, 'Remember Dares and Entellus,'[805] again, 'A weary ox plants his foot more firmly.'[806] A number of proverbs, which approach the nature of a riddle, are applicable here, such as, 'The owl has flown'[807] when we are indicating that something that was begun thoughtlessly has turned out successfully, and 'Under every stone sleeps a scorpion'[808] when we are indicating that lurking snares make nothing safe. Through *occultatio* [occultation],[809] the way that in Ovid Myrrha secretly confesses her love for her father to her nurse, 'Oh mother happy in her spouse.'[810] There is something similar in Seneca's *Hippolytus*,[811] when Phaedra refuses the title of mother as being grand and prefers to be called either sister or servant but preferably servant.[812] The use of this figure will sometimes be appropriate to a preacher when it is not safe to state something openly or when modesty forbids it.

We have confined our review to those figures that seemed appropriate to preachers of the gospel. That leaves the adage,[813] in Greek γνώμη, which

* * * * *

803 See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.54.67, where this is referred to as 'emphasis by Logical Consequence.'

804 See *Adagia* I i 83 'An allegory with proverbial force, by which we indicate a person reduced from the highest rank of authority to a humble status in private life ...' Dionysius, once tyrant at Syracuse, having been expelled by the city, ended up teaching letters and music to the youth of Corinth.

805 See Jerome Ep 102.2 CSEL 55 236. The reference to Dares and Entellus is from Virgil *Aeneid* 5.362–484. See also *De copia* CWE 24 618–19, and *Adagia* III i 69 *Dares Entellum provocas* 'You are Dares challenging Entellus.'

806 *Adagia* I i 47 *Bos lassus fortius figit pedem*. Erasmus attributes this adage to Jerome in writing to St Augustine, as he does the above reference to Dares and Entellus. See CWE 31 97 n3.

807 *Adagia* I i 76 *Noctua volat*.

808 *Adagia* I iv 34 *Sub omni lapide scorpius dormit*.

809 For *occultatio* 'occultation,' cf *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.27.37 (translated as 'paralipsis'). The meaning here differs from Erasmus' sense of the word.

810 Ovid *Metamorphoses* 10.422, cited by Quintilian 9.2.64.

811 The play, regularly known today as *Phaedra* (the title given in the Codex Etruscus), was called *Hippolytus* elsewhere in the manuscript tradition and in early editions. (Translator's note)

812 Seneca *Hyppolytus* (*Phaedra*) 609–12. See Ep 1347 to Joost Vroye, Basel, 1 March 1523.

813 *Sententia* 'sentiment' here signifies a maxim or aphorism; see Quintilian 8.5.3 and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.17.24: 'A Maxim [sentiment] is a saying drawn

shows with agreeable brevity what should be done in life or what tends to happen. This kind is varied with all the figures, and if they are inserted in their place and aptly, like inlays (or rather gemstones), they bring to language many advantages, credibility, authority, dignity, charm, and vigour. One must ensure, however, that they are not used to excess (for a robe embellished with gems is more attractive than one completely covered with them); moreover they should not be trivial or foolish nor obviously false nor shoved in at just any place. I call trivial those that are commended neither by the cleverness of the expression nor by the charm of any figure. I heard someone just before the feast of the Conception of the Virgin[814] exhorting people to fast by saying, 'Some hold that the church today imposes fasting on no one; I admit that this is true, but the man who doesn't lack the lady innkeeper's favour need not go hungry.' This sentiment is faulty on many accounts, being at the same time both trivial and low-minded and foolish and false. Openly false, such as, 'Even the sources of great rivers are navigable'[815] or 'Wicked children are never born from a good father.' Now, just as it makes a great difference which gems you insert and in which place, so it makes the greatest difference what type of adage you interweave and where.

Their application contrary to decorum should also be avoided, for it would be ridiculous if someone assigned serious maxims to a mere adolescent or to a pimp, or adduced Stoic paradoxes[816] in a light and playful subject.[817] Whoever is delivering an adage is in a sense teaching and prescribing rules; this is more suitable to persons endowed with authority, but they have a far greater effect and have more weight if they are cited from approved and celebrated authorities, for example, from canonical Scripture, from the works of philosophers or famous Doctors of the church, or from the conversation of men who were famous for their wisdom and virtue.

But if it should ever happen that we want to use something that was said by a disreputable person, such as a tyrant, a whore, or an actor, we

* * * * *

from life, which shows concisely either what happens or ought to happen in life . . .' Quintilian gives advice on using sentiments aptly; see 8.5.7. See Erasmus *De copia* CWE 24 627–30. See also Aristotle *Rhetorica* 2.21 (1394a–1395b) and *Classical Tradition* 'Maxims.'

814 The feast of the Blessed Mother's conception (8 December) was celebrated many centuries before Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception (8 December 1854) with the bull *Ineffabilis Deus*. See DS 2800–4.

815 Cited by Quintilian 8.3.76

816 Cf Cicero *Paradoxa stoicorum*.

817 Cf Quintilian 8.5.8.

will either commend it through our treatment, as we generally do in the case of examples, or we will take something that has been said wittily, to be sure, but wickedly and twist it to a constructive meaning. Here's an example of the former. If you are denouncing greed, Publilius' words will suit: 'The greedy man lacks what he has as much as what he doesn't have.'[818] This will be commended then as follows: 'It does not matter from whose mouth truth is heard; wherever it is, it belongs to him who says, "I am the way, truth, and life."[819] The author was a pagan and a mime, but the saying is worthy of any Christian, of any apostle.' Likewise, if you are encouraging generosity towards those who are pious but needy, this phrase from the same mime will be appropriate: 'Whoever has given a kindness to a worthy person has received a / kindness in giving it.'[820] Here's an example of the other. If someone is commending trust in the promises of Christ, the following will be suitable: ' "I do not pay for hope";[821] these are the words of a pimp, but one who dealt with people who promised in bad faith. We can safely pay for hope, since we have a guarantor who cannot forswear himself.'

Common sayings also have authority, especially if they are old ones, for if they were not true, they would not be held in regard by everyone and would not have taken hold of people's minds for so many centuries.

Furthermore, since there is an infinite variety of proverbs, I shall mention several types, but only the outstanding ones. There is a kind of adage, called universal,[822] which is not dependent on particular circumstances, such as, 'All people prefer their own interests to those of others.'[823] There is another related to a thing or person: to a thing, such as, 'Nothing is as popular as goodness,'[824] to a person, 'The prince who wants to know everything has necessarily to overlook much.'[825] There is the simple kind with which nothing is combined, such as, 'Nothing clings more tenaciously than what

* * * * *

818 Publilius Syrus *Sententiae* 694; cited by Quintilian 8.5.6
819 John 14:6
820 Publilius Syrus *Sententiae* 68
821 Terence *Adelphi* 219. The phrase (quoted loosely by Erasmus) is spoken by Sannio, the slave dealer.
822 Quintilian 8.5.3
823 Terence *Andria* 426. The phrase is spoken by Byrria and quoted inexactly by Erasmus.
824 Quintilian 8.5.3. The quotation is from Cicero *Pro Ligario* 12.37.
825 Quintilian (8.5.3) cites this line, which he attributes to Domitius Afer. The Latin also contains a wordplay, not reproduced here, on *cognoscere* 'know' and *ignoscere* 'forgive.' (Translator's note)

we learn as children';[826] if you add a reason, it becomes a complete enthymeme,[827] such as, 'Since tender years are not yet taken up with vices and base desires, what we learn as children clings more tenaciously,'[828] and likewise, 'You should not trust a curious man, because he is also a chatterbox.'[829] There is a double one, such as, 'Flattery begets friends, truth begets hatred.'[830] 'Flattery' and 'truth,' 'friends' and 'hatred' are words contrary to each other, yet the two propositions, 'Flattery begets friends,' 'Truth begets hatred,' are not contradictory. Praise goes to the kind that is composed of two different statements, such as this, from a tragedy of Varus: 'Death is not wretched; the approach to death is wretched.'[831] Death and the approach to death are different rather than contrary. Now, there is a straightforward statement that contains no trope or other figure, such as, 'There is nothing that can be compared to a faithful friend.' There is one to which the addition of a trope or figure adds charm, such as through *interrogatio*: 'Is it so wretched to die?'[832] This is more pointed than if he had said, 'Death is not wretched.' Such also is the line from Ovid's *Medea*, 'I was able to save him; do you ask whether I am able to destroy him?'[833] There is another that is transferred to a specific person so that it now loses the appearance of a proverb, such as that from Cicero: 'There is nothing greater in your fortune, Caesar, than your ability to save the greatest possible number, and nothing better in your nature than your willingness to do so.'[834]

There is an expression that they call an *epiphonema*;[835] this is a triumphant final sentence to a narrative of a proof. It produces a striking effect if it is delivered appropriately. In Virgil the following is the striking finale to a narrative: 'So great was the effort to found the Roman race.'[836] And

* * * * *

826 Cf Quintilian 1.1.5.
827 For Erasmus' treatment of the enthymeme, see book 2 472 n25 and 716, where he defines it as 'a maxim with a reason adjoined.' See also Quintilian 8.5.9–11.
828 Cf Quintilian 1.1.5.
829 Erasmus recalls Horace *Epistles* 1.18.69: *percontatorem fugito, nam garrulus idem est*.
830 Terence *Andria* 69; cited by Quintilian 8.5.4
831 Cited by Quintilian 8.5.5. Erasmus attributes this quotation to Varus, but it is uncertain where he got his information for this attribution.
832 Virgil *Aeneid* 12.646, quoted by Quintilian 8.5.6
833 Quoted by Quintilian 8.5.6. The quotation is from Ovid's lost tragedy, *Medea*. See n488 above.
834 Cicero *Pro Ligario* 12.38; cited by Quintilian 8.5.7
835 See Quintilian 8.5.11: 'For an *epiphonema* is an exclamation attached to the close of a statement or a proof by way of climax.'
836 Virgil *Aeneid* 1.33: *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem*.

from Cicero there is this finale to a proof: 'Caesar, will you be sharpened to cruelty by the words of those very men whose freedom from punishment is the glory of your clemency?'[837] But something that is an *epiphonema* is not automatically a proverb; certainly the example adduced from Virgil is not a proverb unless you understand it to mean that great empires have their beginnings from great difficulties.

This kind of statement began with declamations for the sake of applause;[838] from here it passed into public life, then into all studies so that now, after something has been related or proved, the listener or reader expects some clever *epiphonema* to applaud. Hence it has happened that, while this figure is rare in Cicero and the great orators of the same age, it is nevertheless found often in Jerome, Ambrose, and Gregory, for example, this from Peter, who said, 'See, we have left everything.[839] Whoever has kept nothing for himself has left much.'[840] In fact rhetorists[841] in the vulgar tongue have acknowledged this adornment, for sometimes in verses bound by a fixed rhythm they add a brief and witty sentiment instead of a *clausula*, such as in the rhythms that some Frenchman has added to the dance of death.[842]

It is applied more appropriately in epilogues, where the principal points of the whole argument are fixed in the listeners' minds, yet it is sometimes applied aptly in the individual sections as well, for example, if someone who has denounced perjury were to exclaim, 'Whoever swears falsely by God denies him,' or if someone who has discouraged rash swearing were to cry out, 'Whoever has made a habit of swearing without reason will also swear falsely whenever a reason invites,' or if someone who has attacked the vice of drunkenness were to close with 'Whoever likes drunkenness would like insanity as well,' likewise, 'Whoever thinks it humane to drive a friend to intoxication by serving him drinks would call it humane to give a friend the poison of madness.' Similarly, it will be permissible to

* * * * *

837 Quintilian 8.5.10; the quotation is from Cicero *Pro Ligario* 3.10.

838 Cf Quintilian 8.5.14; cf Seneca *Controversiae* 9, *praef*. 1–2.

839 Matt 19:27; Mark 10:28; Luke 18:28

840 Gregory the Great (Pope Gregory I) *Homilia v* CCSL 141 34:18–20: *Multum reliquit qui sibi nihil retinuit, multum reliquit qui quamlibet parum, totum deseruit*. See Gregory the Great *Forty Homilies* trans Dom David Hurst (Kalamazoo, Mich 1990) 11. The translator has renumbered the traditional sequence of Gregory's homilies; Homily 5 appears as Homily 2.

841 For Erasmus' idea of 'rhetorists,' see n725 above.

842 For 'the dance of death,' see Anonymous *La danse macabré des hommes* (Paris: Guyot Marchant 1485); see also J. Huizinga *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (Garden City, NY 1957) 144–51.

close an exhortation towards generosity to the needy with 'Someone who assists a poor person is obliging Christ, not the person,' or with 'Whoever aids a needy person is not giving to the person but investing in God.'

But while it has charm if it is done appropriately, its overuse and affectation also makes it wearisome and, more seriously, deprives the speaker of credibility.[843] Now, it is impossible for someone who strives to ἐπιφωνεῖν [add a phrase by way of ornament][844] at every part of a narration or proof not to admit feeble *clausulae* from time to time.

There is another kind of sentiment that the Greeks call a νόημα [indication] (we can say *intellectus*),[845] when we secretly indicate something for the listener to guess for himself. I shall provide an example from a declamation. A sister, who had often bought her brother back from a gladiatorial school, cut off his thumb while he slept; he sues his sister for injuries, and on the sister's behalf the young man is told, 'You deserved to have your hand uninjured.' These words seem to suit someone who is commiserating, whereas they reproach him with his servile nature; for though he was so often bought back in vain and finally deprived of his thumb so that he could not be a gladiator, nevertheless he sued his kindly sister for injuries. People who have such a nature deserve to fight in the arena.

But I do not see how this type can be of use to a preacher, as also some others which I pass over for the same reason as having been mentioned by Quintilian, except perhaps when one must speak about an enormity that cannot be named honourably but rather is left to the audience's imagination, such as what Jerome says about Fabiola: 'The noble girl was compelled to endure what no serving girl would endure; the neighbourhood talked, she herself kept silent.'[846] A listener who is not stupid easily guesses from this the meaning that Jerome wants conveyed.

In Holy Scripture there frequently occur twinned expressions, with the addition of either a reason (we have discussed this kind)[847] or a simile

* * * * *

843 See Quintilian 8.5.26 and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.17.25.

844 The verb from which the noun *epiphonema* derives. The word refers to a text that works by indirection, not stating a fact, but implying it. (Translator's note)

845 That is, 'understanding'; see Quintilian 8.5.12. Quintilian provides the following example of the sister and her brother, the gladiator.

846 Jerome Ep 77.3 (to Oceanus) NPNF 2nd series 6 158. Chomarat (ASD V-5 155 1n) notes that in Erasmus' extensive comments on 1 Cor 7:39 he uses this passage to plead for the possibility of divorce in certain cases; see *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* 7:39 ASD VI-8 144–90, especially 184–90.

847 With 'twinned expressions' Erasmus refers here to the type of prose and poetry characteristic of certain books of the Bible that state an idea briefly

or a comparison or a contrary or a distinction or a similarity or the same thing repeated in different words.[848] A simile: 'Just as water extinguishes fire, so alms extinguish sin.'[849] A comparison, such as, 'The price of a whore is barely that of a single loaf, but it steals a man's precious soul,'[850] likewise, 'There is gold and a multitude of gems; but the lips of knowledge are a precious vessel.'[851] A contrary, such as, 'A foolish man changes like the moon, but a wise one is steady like the sun,'[852] likewise, 'A mind full of joy makes life flourish; a sad spirit dries up the bones.'[853] A distinction, such as, 'To sin is human, but to persist in sinning is devilish.'[854] A similarity, such as, 'The just man will flourish like a palm, like the cedar of Lebanon he will be multiplied.'[855] The same, such as, 'The mouth of the just man will ponder wisdom, and his tongue will speak judgment.'[856] These are in general the means by which many expressions are paired in the canonical books. The Greeks call something that is chanted thus in imitation of another a παρῳδή [parody],[857] deriving the word from the fact that it was once the custom in songs for something to be chanted in imitation of a previous melody. That custom then passed to the poets and orators, though in comedies dialogue was delivered in strict measures so that it would be fixed all the more in the audience's mind. Moreover, it is agreed that there was considerable use

* * * * *

and follow it with a succinct restatement. The technique is often referred to as 'parallelism,' or more accurately here 'synonymous parallelism' and 'antithetic parallelism'; see Aloysius Fitzgerald FSC 'Hebrew Poetry' JBC I 238–44, especially 242–3.

848 'Or a simile [*similitudo*], or a comparison [*comparatio*], or a contrary [*contrarium*], or a distinction [*diversum*], or a similarity [*affinum*], or the same thing repeated in different words [*eadem aliis verbis repetita*].'

849 Ecclus 3:33

850 Prov 6:26. Erasmus' quotation from the Vulgate is not entirely accurate.

851 Prov 20:15

852 Ecclus 27:12

853 Prov 17:22

854 This quotation is not biblical. Cf Marius Victorinus *Commentarii in epistulas Pauli, In Epistulam Pauli ad Epheseos* CSEL 83.2 (2.4.28): 'Non omnino peccare peccatum est, sed in peccato perseverare; datur enim poenitentiae locus, datur correctioni.' Chomarat (ASD V-5 135 11–12n) opines that its origin is from Cicero *Philippics* 12.2.5: 'Every man is liable to err; it is the part only of a fool to persevere in error . . .'

855 Ps 92:12 (Vulg 91:13)

856 Ps 37:30 (Vulg 36:30)

857 For παρῳδή, see Quintilian 9.2.35: '*Parody*, a name drawn from songs sung in imitation of others, but employed by an abuse of language to designate imitation in verse or prose.'

of music among the Hebrews. As I have said, epigrammatic statements contribute to many advantages if they are serious, witty, and elegant and are interwoven opportunely.[858]

There remains metaphor,[859] which holds primacy among all the powers of language. Nothing persuades more effectively, nothing lays something more clearly before the eyes, nothing stirs emotions more powerfully, nothing contributes more dignity, charm, and attractiveness, or even eloquence; this must now be discussed after I first advise that examples have great power both for persuading and for inflaming minds with the emulation of virtue.[860]

The things that are especially capable of moving are the ones drawn from those whose authority is irrefutable; this is so supreme in Christ that he is almost the sole authority, for whatever was done by the patriarchs or prophets in the Old Testament or by the saints in the New should not simply be drawn upon as a guide for living unless what is told of them is undoubtedly true or is proven by Scripture itself, for example, the fact that David was compelled by urgent necessity to eat the sacred loaves that the Hebrews call the 'shewbread.'[861]

Likewise private and less weighty examples have a greater power to move. But one must use one's artistic skill to make everything that has been recorded in the holy books seem personal to us, for there is a single city and home of all the devout, and it is for us that those things were done, for us that they were recorded in writing. Less weighty examples are those drawn from pagans, from those who venerate the Old Testament to disciples of the gospel, from women to men, from children to the elderly, from lay persons to priests and monks, from the head of a household to a prince, from a soldier to a theologian.

Moreover, examples are drawn even from the brute animals that by nature's prompting provide many models of virtue, such as the fact that doves flock together when they see a kite, that cattle and horses collect when they see a wolf, reminding us by this very act that the strongest defence is in

* * * * *

858 For Quintilian's caution in applying sentiments, see 8.5.25–34.

859 For 'metaphor,' see 479, 705, 787, 857–8 above and 872, 875–6, 892, 930–2, 960 below.

860 With 'examples have great power . . . virtue,' Erasmus reiterates his fundamental conviction of the power of example to move listeners to embrace virtue; the example par excellence is Christ in all his works and words. See Quintilian 12.4.12; cf 5.11.17–19; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.49.62 (*exemplum*); and *De copia* CWE 24 606–20.

861 1 Sam 21:6; see Exod 25:30; Matt 12:2–4; Luke 6:2–4.

unity,[862] likewise the fact that elephants do not permit their young to wander about without an escort and that they mate only in remote and solitary places,[863] the fact that doves preserve the fidelity of their marriage,[864] turtle doves even shun[865] remarriage after the loss of their companion;[866] moreover, many animals mount only at certain times of the year, and the males do not approach pregnant females and the pregnant females do not admit males, and countless things like this.

In fact, it will be permissible to derive examples of the virtues even from plants, from the elements, from the heavenly bodies: of order, for example, of harmony, of obedience, because they never violate the laws prescribed by God, because they steadfastly carry out the duties assigned by their Creator.[867] But perhaps someone will think that these are more a case of similitudes.[868]

* * * * *

862 'Unity' (*concordia*) is one of Erasmus' principal themes. At the end of book 4, Erasmus gives a model *concio* that develops this theme. See also Sallust *Jugurtha* 10.6 ('. . . for harmony makes small states great, while discord undermines the mightiest empires'); and Publilius Syrus *Sententiae* 327 ('Victory is ever there where union of hearts is').

863 See Pliny *Naturalis historia* 8.5.11 and 8.5.13.

864 See Pliny *Naturalis historia* 10.52.104.

865 'Shun': The verb form here *abhorreant* is subjunctive, though all the other verbs that Erasmus uses here in these parallel constructions are indicative; apparently a slip of his, rather than a typographical error.

866 Jerome *Adversus Jovinianum* 1.30 PL 23 (1845) 252; NPNF 2nd series 6 368: 'The turtle, the chastest of birds, always dwelling in lofty places, is a type of the Saviour. Let us read the works of naturalists and we shall find that it is the nature of the turtle dove, if it lose its mate, not to take another; and we shall understand that second marriage is repudiated even by dumb birds.'

867 See Erasmus' words on harmony (*concordia*), book 4 1028–9, 1040, 1057, 1061, 1097–1104.

868 Erasmus seems to say here that similitudes are not truly examples of the virtues but just accidental or incidental similarities. Erasmus'use of the term *similitudo* can cause problems for the translator, and in this translation the translators have sought to keep the distinction between our contemporary understanding of simile and what would be considered a likeness or comparison. For various examples and uses of *similitudo*, see 662–9, 679, 702, 704–10, 828, 864 above and 931, 950–1, 972, 1076 below. See also Erasmus'1534 edition of *De copia* book 2 (CWE 24 337), where he adds a definition of *similitudo*: 'A simile [*similitudo*] is a metaphor that is made explicit and specifically related to the subject. Cicero's word for this is *collatio* "comparison." "He was white-hot with anger" is a metaphor; "his whole face was suffused with rage just as iron glows in the fire" is a simile.' For simile (*similitudo*), see Quintilian 5.11, 8.6.49, 72–81. For likeness, see *De copia* CWE 24 623: 'LIKENESSES. The εἰκών, in Latin *imago* "likeness," is very like the parallel or simile. In fact,

It is the role of art to make examples that are unequal in themselves seem more unequal through amplification and diminution; this is done by comparing all the circumstances. Suppose, for example, you were exhorting priests to practise continence: the first step is to consider gender – 'Agnes and Cecilia were women'[869] – the next, age – 'They were girls' – the third, physical condition – 'of outstanding appearance' – the fourth, education and fortune – 'born of famous and wealthy families, raised in luxury' – the fifth, condition – 'They were free, bound by no vows' – the sixth, various circumstances, such as, 'Their parents were urging them to marriage, distinguished suitors were seeking their hand, yet they could not be broken down by any means to exchange their virginity even for a lawful marriage; and the men, some even of advanced age, raised in monasteries and schooled in learning, bound by vows, though discouraged by their friends and facing serious disrepute, cry out that they cannot be continent but either take wives or keep concubines or, the most wicked thing of all, taint everything with promiscuous relations.'

It is also the function of art to make unequal things that are equal,[870] or, a greater accomplishment, to invert unequals, that is, to make the lesser the greater and the greater the lesser. For example, let us posit as equals the fact that Peter forswore the Lord three times and the fact that some are now defecting to the Jews, Turks, or heretics. These will be made unequal through a consideration of the circumstances: 'Peter denied,[871] but he was only a Jew: he did not yet know Christ except as in a dream, had not yet drunk the heavenly Spirit;[872] and he forswore because struck by sudden fear, and only forswore, did not profess a sect hostile to Christ, did not disparage his Lord. Finally, he was not in command of himself when he forswore. As soon as he returned to himself, he wept bitterly.[873] But how much more wicked are you, who under no compulsion of fear, of your own free will, after drinking the Spirit in baptism, after tasting God's good word, deliberately defect to the enemies not only of Christ but of everything that is called "Christian." And there you stay, there you listen calmly to blasphemies against your God and

* * * * *

if it is expanded, it becomes a simile.' Erasmus discusses the *imago* at 877 below.

869 For St Agnes, see *Legenda aurea* 1:110–13; for St Cecilia ibidem 2:318–23; and 'Agnes, St' ODCC 29; 'Cecilia, St' ibidem 308–9.

870 Cf Quintilian 5.11.9–12; see also book 2 521. Quintilian notes that 'courage is more remarkable in a woman than in a man . . .,' which idea Erasmus follows in his example of Agnes and Cecilia.

871 Matt 26:69–75

872 The allusion is to Acts 2 and the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel 2:28–32.

873 Matt 26:75

your Lord; in fact, you do not refrain from insults of your own, and you are ready to nail him to the cross again if you had the chance. And even after so many years, you do not return to yourself but exult in your wickedness,' etc.

Inversio [inversion] will be effected as follows: 'Judas selling and betraying the Lord[874] seems to be a greater impiety than if a bishop or priest should sell the sacraments or preach the Gospel insincerely, but on closer inspection what we do involves greater impiety. He did not yet know Christ as he is known to us; he had not yet died for him, had not yet been revealed in the resurrection, had not yet sent the Holy Spirit. Nor did Judas sell Christ with the intention that he should be killed, but hoped that he would escape as he had so often extricated himself before; the proof is that as soon as he saw him captive, he confessed before his purchasers that he had betrayed innocent blood, discarded the money, went away, and hanged himself.[875] Fortunate he would have been had he confessed to Christ what he confessed to the Jews and had taken refuge in tears and mercy rather than in the noose! And yet what Judas did turned out for the salvation of the entire world; so it had been decided, so Christ wished, so it had to happen.[876] But how far is Judas outstripped in impiety by those men who kill a Christ already known to the world, already reigning in heaven, adulterating the word of God through which souls live again, corrupting the faith without which there is no salvation for anyone, extinguishing the love that he wished to be kindled in the minds of men. And though they do these things continually, yet they do not hate themselves as Judas did, they do not acknowledge their crime but even seek praise from their impious deeds. The real betrayers of Christ are those who destroy that for which Christ died.'

I think that the preacher should refrain entirely from fantastic illustrations, at least before a mixed assemblage, though those orators have cause to use these too.[877] Indeed, I see that the custom existed within living memory for preachers near the end of their address to use certain stories that could seem to have been invented deliberately in order to strike terror in the uneducated and the hard-hearted, or for the purpose of urging some-

* * * * *

874 Matt 26:14–16, 47–50

875 Matt 27:3–5

876 On this question of God's determination and Judas' free choice in betraying Jesus, see Lorenzo Valla *Dialogue on Free Will* in E. Cassirer, P.O. Kristeller, and J.H. Randall Jr *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man* (Chicago and London 1948) 155–84, especially 162–3.

877 Cf Quintilian 5.11.17; *De copia* CWE 24 606–23, especially 610–16.

thing intrinsically profitable, for example, about people who lived wickedly and were snatched away by demons, or about the archdeacon who, when he heard recited in church, 'He who lowers himself will be exalted,'[878] said, 'It's a lie; had I lowered myself, I would never have risen to this rank': soon a thunderbolt sent from heaven took away his blasphemous tongue and his life.

There is a similar story about a bawd who was promised a pair of shoes by the devil if she could induce to lapse into the sin of incontinence a certain holy man whom he himself had tempted for a long time without result. The bawd accomplished her task and asked for her reward in accordance with the agreement, but the demon stuck her shoes on the end of a long spear and held them out to her across a river, suggesting by this very action that the woman was so wicked that she should be detested even by the very demons. I shall not relate more models; saying this is enough for the reader to understand what I mean.

Even among these there are some stories produced by serious authors and so plausible that they could be believed to be true; some again are so clever and apposite that even if they are invented they ought to be reported as true or at least likely, for those that are told as fictions, since they lack credibility, either fall flat or are even met with mockery, unless they take on the character of parables.

But this whole genre of illustrations should be applied quite sparingly and with discrimination, especially before a learned audience. This is sufficient for the present on the subject of illustrations, for we have said quite enough about these both earlier in this work and in my other writings.[879]

Now I return to metaphor and the figures derived from it.[880] Metaphor shows by its very name what it does, for, to achieve some useful purpose, it 'transfers'[881] a word from its literal meaning to another through some similarity; for instance, when we say that a man stirred by anger flared up or blazed, the image has been transferred from fire to the mind, or that youth has stopped boiling and foaming, the image is drawn from pots that boil over at the start and spew out foam.

* * * * *

878 Luke 14:11; Matt 23:12

879 See *De copia* CWE 24 606–23.

880 Erasmus' treatment of metaphor ended abruptly (871 above); however, he discussed it at book 2 479, 705, 787, 857–8. See also *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.34.45 and Quintilian 8.6.4–18.

881 Etymologically μεταφορά (*metaphora*) means 'carrying across' and is therefore equivalent to our Latin-derived 'transference.' (Translator's note)

Very like metaphor is *catachresis*, in Latin *abusio*:[882] the only difference is that in metaphor we prefer to use a transferred word even though a proper one exists, because this is more suited to creating the desired effect. For example, someone who speaks of 'a wise man's mind of steel' could say 'constant and unmoving,' but someone who speaks of 'gems' on vines,[883] 'luxuriousness' in grasses, or 'happiness' in crops is using a transferred word because there is no proper one.

But if all the language is composed of transferred words, it becomes an allegory, so called because it says one thing, wants another to be understood,[884] such as the entire ode of Horace that begins, 'Oh ship, fresh waves will bear you / Back to sea,' etc.[885] *Similitudo* [simile] or a *collatio* [comparison], however, is a metaphor unwound.[886] For example, 'Anyone who tried to overturn the state, whose destruction would make his own safety impossible, would be a madman'; the language is plain because it is composed of the words in their literal sense. But if you should say, 'It would be a sign of obvious madness to wish to sink a state in whose sinking he himself would have to perish in shipwreck,' it is a metaphor because metaphorical words have been combined with literal ones. But if you were to say to someone plotting the destruction of his homeland, 'Why are you striving to drill through the ship in which you are sailing, in whose sinking you too would have to perish in the common shipwreck?' it is an allegory. Again, if you should say, 'Just as someone who drilled through a ship in which he himself was sailing would be considered mad, so it would be an act of extreme foolishness to wish to destroy the state in which you live, in whose destruction you could not be safe,' it is a comparison.

* * * * *

882 For *catachresis* and *abusio*, see Quintilian 8.6.34–6 and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.33.45. See also *De copia* CWE 24 336–7.

883 The Latin *gemma* means a vinebud. See Quintilian 8.6.6: 'As an example of a necessary metaphor I may quote the following usages in vogue with peasants when they call a vinebud *gemma*, a gem (what other term is there which they could use?) . . .'

884 'Allegory,' from ἄλλος 'other' and ἀγορεύειν 'to speak.' (Translator's note)

885 Horace *Odes* 1.14.1–2. For Horace's allegory (*inversio*), see Quintilian 8.6.44: 'Horace represents the state under the semblance of a ship, the civil wars as tempests, and peace and good will as the haven . . .' For the *locus classicus* of the ship of state, see Plato *Republic* 6.488A–E.

886 For *similitudo* 'simile,' see Quintilian 8.6.8: 'On the whole *metaphor* is a shorter form of *simile* . . .' For simile, see 662 with n1029 and passim. For *collatio* 'comparison,' see Quintilian 5.11.23: 'For παραβολή, which Cicero translates by "comparison," is often apt to compare things whose resemblance is far less obvious.' Cf Cicero *De inventione* 1.30.49.

Imago [an image][887] differs very little from a simile, since it is a type of simile. For a simile is applied for adornment, for pleasure, for persuasion, for clarity, for gravity and is taken from every kind of thing; an image is drawn only from the form of a living creature and contributes either to amplifying something or to setting it before the eyes, for instance, if you should depict a rapacious and abusive man as being similar to a crested dragon[888] with its blazing eyes, sharp teeth, hooked claws, gaping maw that flies everywhere looking about to find someone on whom he can breathe some evil from his jaws, someone to touch with his mouth, rend with his teeth, splash with his tongue, tear with his claws.

Effictio [portrayal][889] is a kind of *hypotyposis*, which does not seek a simile from another form but sets out a man's actual appearance before the eyes in a sort of picture, in a manner consistent with the line of argument, whether one wishes to represent him as hateful or suspect. For example, 'Do you not think that nature has painted the image of a most foul mind in his very body? A tapering head, squinting eyes, a hooked nose, a snake's mouth, a stuttering tongue, the voice of a rooster, a hump on his back almost taller than his head, a prominent gut, twisted shins, two lame feet,' etc.

Since Quintilian, the most painstaking of all rhetoricians, has left copious instructions (and I have done the same in my work *De copia*) concerning the means of applying simile and the many kinds of things from which it is derived,[890] I shall not repeat here material that is well known and commonplace. I shall only advise that one should take care that the simile square with that to which it is being applied; that it not be tawdry or obscene; that it not be taken from subjects unfamiliar to the people we are addressing unless the nature of the thing is so important that it is worthwhile for them to learn it; that it not be difficult and far-fetched, that it not be readily twisted another way. Holy Scripture everywhere abounds with this figure of speech, especially the gospel narratives, but examples are generally drawn

* * * * *

887 See book 2 466–7; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.49.62; Cicero *De inventione* 1.30.49.

888 Chomarat (ASD V-5 161 160–4n) observes that Erasmus' description of a dragon derives, with additions, from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (4.49.62); he does not note that, while a snake is certainly described in the source, the addition of claws and especially of the power of flight show that the medieval conception of a dragon is what Erasmus has in mind.

889 For *effictio* 'efficition' or 'portrayal,' see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.49.63: 'consists in representing and depicting in words clearly enough for recognition the bodily form of some person . . .'

890 Quintilian 8.3.72–81, 5.11.22. See eg Erasmus *De copia* CWE 24 616–20, 638, 641–2, 644.

only from things quite familiar to ordinary people. Among the Doctors of the church no one uses this figure more generously than John Chrysostom.

Similitudo [comparison] or (as Cicero prefers) *collatio*[891] differs both from image and from *effictio* [portrayal] in the distinction that, besides its other powers, it frequently has the forceful power of ratiocination, for example, whenever we take what an adversary adduces and transfer it to something similar in which its obvious absurdity is demonstrated. An Arian argues, 'Does the Father create willingly or unwillingly? If unwillingly, he is not God; if willingly, the Word is necessarily a son of will, not of nature.'[892] This is beaten back with a parallel: 'Did your father create you willingly or unwillingly? Willingly of course. Therefore you are a son not of nature but of will,' but this contains a manifest absurdity. Again, their argument, 'What creates must be prior to the created; therefore the Father is older than the Son,' is refuted with 'Which is older, the sun or the ray emanating from the sun?'; what might seem probable in the one case seems foolish in the other. Similarly, when they argue that 'begotten and unbegotten are contradictory; but only the Father is called unbegotten. Hence he is not of the same nature with the Son, and so neither is he God,' they are refuted with a comparison: 'The first man was not begotten but made from clay;[893] he is not, therefore, of the same nature as other men who are born. From this it follows either that he has been called man falsely or that the others who have been procreated from parents should not be called men'; nothing is more ridiculous than this. Likewise, when they exclude the Son from a share of the divine nature, using the words of the Gospel, 'That they may know you as the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you sent,'[894] they say that 'if only the Father is true God, what impudence does it take to proclaim the Son as God?' They are refuted with the evidence of Baruch 3, 'He is our God, and no other shall be judged in comparison with him.'[895] What follows shows that this was said of the Son: 'After this he was seen on earth, and he associated with men.'[896] 'Only he is God' and 'There is not another' are similars; if we press these words, only the Son will be God, to the

* * * * *

891 Erasmus apparently takes the phrase 'or (as Cicero prefers) *collatio*' from Quintilian 5.11.23. See 872 n868 above.

892 Erasmus rehearses in a simplified way the great Christological and Trinitarian debates of the fourth and fifth centuries, especially the Arian controvery. For these debates, see Grillmeier I 219–389, especially 368–70. See also Nazianzus.

893 See Gen 2:7.

894 John 17:3

895 Bar 3:36, cited by Nazianzus *Oration* 30.13 (104)

896 Bar 3:38

exclusion of the Father and the Holy Spirit. Gregory the Theologian[897] and Hilary[898] often make successful use of this kind of argumentation. I forego an accumulation of examples, especially since we are treating the subject in this less appropriate position, because it did not occur to me earlier. The character of the language will vary in accordance with the nature of the comparison: it will be pleasant if it is drawn from something pleasant, grand if from something lofty, harsh if from something frightening, moderate if from something moderate, humble if from something humble.

An example of pleasant diction will be, 'Just as the grime and gloom of winter is dispelled when Favonius[899] blows with its soft breezes and the whole appearance of nature is renewed as if with fresh youth, trees are adorned with new foliage, charmingly verdant plants are set off by a variety of bright flowers, rivers glide more pleasantly, the sun itself and the whole appearance of the sky delight the eyes with a gentler view, so the ugliness of a man's past life disappears at once as soon as the grace of the Holy Spirit has blown upon his mind, and his whole life shines with glorious virtues instead of vices; you would say that he was happily reborn.'[900]

This example of the grand style: 'Just as God, though he needs nothing, nevertheless of his own nature delights in benefiting all, so those who call God "Father" should help everyone in so far as they can – and without thought of reward.'

This of the sharp style:[901] 'Do you grow pale at the breath or bite of a viper and run to a physician? How much more horrible is turpitude, which contains a poison more effective than all vipers, and how much more quickly must medicine be sought!'

This of the middling style: 'Just as those who follow Hesiod's advice

* * * * *

897 Gregory the Theologian (Gregory of Nazianzus); see 491 n119 above.

898 For Hilary of Poitiers (c 315–67 or 8), see book 2 493 n125.

899 Favonius was the Roman god of the mild western wind or breeze that ushered in the spring. See Pliny *Naturalis historia* 2.46.119: 'Favonius from the equinoctial sunset (W[est].)'; Horace *Odes* 1.4: *Solvitur acris hiems grata vice veris et Favoni*.

900 Cf Horace *Odes* 1.4 for Erasmus' likely inspiration for some of this passage. See also John 3:8.

901 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* (4.19.38–4.20.40) speaks only of the grand, middle, and humble style; Quintilian (12.10.59–72), however, speaks of many types of speaking: 'Eloquence has, therefore, a quantity of different aspects, but it is sheer folly to inquire which of these the orator should take as his model, since every species that is in itself correct has its use, and what is commonly called "style of speaking" [*genus dicendi*] does not depend on the orator. For he will use all styles, as circumstances may demand, and the choice will

and frequently add small things to small finally turn out rich, so the man who is always advancing towards improvement in virtues finally turns out perfect.'[902]

This of the humble or lowly style: 'Just as beggars conceal whatever property they possess but show their rags and wounds to stir the kindness of those who see them, so we should not boast of our kindnesses before God but profess our wrongs if we want to elicit his mercy towards us.'

Now, besides those three types of speaking, which rhetoricians mention and of which Augustine presents some examples both from canonical Scripture and from the Doctors of the church, there are numerous other differences.[903] There is harsh and gentle, there is fiery and calm, there is restrained and florid, there is sweet and bitter, there is elaborate and simple, there is clear and complex, there is straight and indirect, there is prolix and terse.

Therefore, after the candidate for the office of preacher holds, so to speak, in ready cash the knowledge we have imparted concerning amplifications and figures of speech, he will be able to use this method to adapt it to his own use. Let him consider carefully all the parts of the theme that he has undertaken to explain, and he will quickly grasp which topics call for splendour, which forcefulness, which pleasantness or the other marks of diction; soon he will be adapting the resources of his art to the various types of excellence.[904] It would take too long to demonstrate this with an example;

* * * * *

be determined not only by the case as a whole, but by the demands of the different portions of the case . . . He will speak gravely, severely, sharply, with vehemence, energy, fullness, bitterness, or geniality, quietly, simply, flatteringly, gently, sweetly, briefly or wittily. . .' (12.10.69–71).

902 Cf Hesiod *Works and Days* 361–2: 'He who adds to what he has, will keep off bright-eyed hunger; for if you add only a little to a little and do this often, soon that little will become great.' Cf *Adagia* I viii 94, where Erasmus explains the adage (94), *Multis ictibus deiicitur quercus* 'Many strokes fell great oaks.'

903 See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.18.35–4.20.40. See also Quintilian 12.10.66–7: 'But eloquence cannot be confined even to these three forms of style. For just as the third style is intermediate between the grand and the plain style, so each of these three are separated by interspaces which are occupied by intermediate styles compounded of the two which lie on either side. For there are styles fuller or plainer than the plain, and gentler or more vehement than the vehement, while the gentler style itself may either rise to greater force or sink to milder tones . . .'

904 For 'various types of excellence,' see Lausberg §§458–1077. The meaning here seems to be that each part of a sermon will have its appropriate excellence corresponding to the three styles mentioned. (A. Dalzell)

nevertheless, I shall present an approximate semblance of one from which the clever reader may divine the rest.

Suppose the subject of the sermon is the paralytic of Matthew 9, Luke 5.[905] First, if the story is told appropriately, the language will contain much delight and clarity, and some emotions as well. Right in the very exordium the commonplace suggests itself about the wonderful goodness of the Lord Jesus, whose whole life was nothing but a showing of kindness towards everyone. You will find that he brought help to some unasked, such as the man who had a withered hand;[906] you will find that there was no one whose request for aid he refused, so inexhaustible was his goodness and so indefatigable his love. Continually he changes place but does not change his zeal for doing good. He walks about not for his own gratification but to spread his kindness more widely; he teaches or consoles or restores to life or heals or feeds or frees or withdraws to pray. By teaching, he treats minds, by curing incurable diseases and by other miracles, he establishes the credibility of his teaching, and all for free. And when he withdraws, he withdraws for us, prays for us, thanks the Father for us, and there is no place from which he departs without leaving there the memorials of his love and the seeds of the evangelical philosophy and the fragrance of an honourable repute and the substance on which the Father's glory rests. Therefore, 'God is giving help to mortals,' as some pagan put it,[907] is most true of Jesus. 'His power,' says Luke, 'was available to heal everyone.'[908] That power was not for harming but for helping, not just these or those ('for there is no respecting of persons in God's eyes')[909] but simply everyone. It was natural to him to help everyone. Wherever you take fire, it warms; wherever there is sun, it shines; wherever water, it glides, it wets; wherever ointment is spread, it scatters the charm of its aroma. He was Saviour, wanted nothing, was capable of nothing else but saving. Whoever dies, dies by his own vice. It was fitting that the life of those who profess themselves to be, and are, vicars of Christ should be of this kind.

* * * * *

905 Matt 9:2–8; Luke 5:17–26; also Mark 2:1–12. See also Erasmus' paraphrase of this pericope in *Paraphrasis in Marcum* CWE 49 30–8; *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 151–4. See also Godin 316–17.

906 Matt 12:10–13; Mark 3:1–6; Luke 6:6–11

907 Cf Pliny *Naturalis historia* 2.5.18: 'For mortal to aid mortal – this is god; and this is the road to eternal glory . . .'

908 Luke 5:17

909 2 Chron 19:7; Rom 2:11; Eph 6:9; Col 3:25

Therefore, he withdrew from the dim-witted Gadarenes when asked to leave their country;[910] they feared his power more than they loved his kindness and were more deeply troubled by the loss of swine than they were delighted by the salvation of men. But not even at such dim-witted people as these is the most gentle Saviour indignant; he only departs, and after crossing the lake, again returns into his city of Capernaum,[911] not because he was born there, but because at that time he had his regular residence there (in fact he was born in Bethlehem, raised in Nazareth). It was a city of Galilee (whence he was also taken for a Galilean),[912] on the shore, fit for businessmen, enervated by indulgence, and swollen with pride (the concomitant of wealth). For this is the city against which he shouts elsewhere, 'And you, Capernaum, will you ever be exalted to the sky? You will be dragged down to hell.'[913] Nevertheless, that most gentle Lamb, who had come not to call the just but to invite sinners to penitence,[914] did not disdain to have his residence among these very corrupted people. That heart of pity seeks out the pitiful, seeks out the sick like a friendly physician; he alone dwells without disdain among sinners because he alone was free from all contagion of sin.

He used to teach sitting in a house.[915] It appears that the house was modest, since it does not have a name, nor was there anything remarkable about the chair, though at this time certain rabbis, quite unlike Christ, talked only in churches from a lofty throne covered with linen or cloth of gold to dignify the scene (I am not attacking the zeal of those who present this sort of honour to teachers, but those who pursue it should be attacked).[916] But wherever Christ is, there is a sacred basilica;[917] wherever he sits,[918] whether

* * * * *

910 Matt 8:28–34, especially 34; Luke 8:26–39, especially 37

911 Matt 9:1 mentions that Jesus got back into the boat, crossed the lake, 'and came into his own city,' but it does not mention that he returned to Capernaum; Matt 4:13 supplies the information for this inference.

912 Cf John 7:41, 52.

913 Matt 11:23

914 Cf Mark 2:17.

915 See Luke 5:17–26; cf Mark 2:1–12; Matt 9:2–8.

916 The meaning of this sentence is obscure, but Chomarat seems to believe that it describes an elevated chair under a canopy made from some splendid fabric; see ASD V-5 167 289n.

917 Cf John 4:24 and *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 58: 'This present time is the limit set to the shadows and outlines of the law of Moses. From now on, wherever there is a mind cleansed from sin through the gospel faith, there will be a temple worthy of God . . .'

918 Cf Matt 5:1–2; Matt 15:29, 24:3; John 6:3.

upon some grassy hill[919] or in a shabby little boat[920] or at a banquet,[921] there is the lofty chair of heavenly philosophy. Here we have the commonplace about how it befits the preacher to talk about Christ everywhere, not just in a church.

First he teaches,[922] then he heals the paralytic. A man's better part is his mind; therefore, it deservedly claims prior attention. He uses language to treat minds, whose diseases are far more dangerous than those of bodies. Everywhere he teaches spontaneously; he performs miracles only on occasion and generally when requested, for they are performed only to win credibility and authority for his words among unbelievers. And look, while he speaks, an opportuity arises to display his power. The paralytic, confined to a cot, is carried by some porters who had no doubt that the Lord could save him, since no kind of disease was beyond his healing, and would be willing to do so if only the sight of his pitiable tragedy should come before his pitying eyes. But a dense crowd blocking the door does not allow the wretched man access; for who could bear to be torn away from so eloquent a speaker? But such a mass of men had come streaming that, when the house was full, many clung to Jesus' words at the doors and windows. Christians should bring equally ardent minds to the preacher's words. In church it is not Christ who is teaching, but it is the word of Christ that teaches; and the spirit of Christ speaks through the mouth of a man.

Meanwhile, what are the bearers doing outside? They do not allow the opportunity to slip from their hands. They do something impudent in the eyes of the world, but 'shame is useless for a man in need,'[923] as the Greek proverbs say. Here we have the commonplace about those whom shame deters from confessing their sins;[924] it is a happy impudence that wins the salvation of the whole man through faith. There is a similar example in the account of the woman who sinned, who was not ashamed to burst uninvited

* * * * *

919 John 6:10

920 For 'shabby little boat' (*sordida navicula*), see eg Matt 13:2–3. There is no adjective modifying any occurrence of the word 'boat' in the gospels.

921 For 'banquet' (*convivium*), cf Luke 5:29, 11:37–53.

922 See Mark 2:3. Erasmus reiterates the primacy of teaching (*docere*) in Christ's earthly ministry; and so it is the primary and special *(praecipuum*) duty of the bishop as well.

923 Cf Hesiod *Works and Days* 317: 'An evil shame is the needy man's companion . . .'; cf *Adagia* III v 65 *Viro esurienti necesse furari* 'A hungry man must needs be a thief.'

924 Cf Horace *Epistles* 1.16.24: 'Fools, through false shame, hide the unhealed sore.'

into the banquet of the Pharisees with hair dishevelled.[925] With a mighty effort they carry their burden into the house.[926] It is likely that the house had no upper storeys and was not a house like ours but flatter, in which one could walk (the sort of which some examples are still seen in Italy and Spain), and they open up part of the roof and lower the paralytic with his cot on ropes to Jesus' feet. Someone might ask, 'Why didn't they wait for the end of the sermon?' They knew that the Lord was being accosted by many people on all sides and went nowhere except surrounded by a very dense crowd, but that with their burden they were hardly equipped to follow Jesus or to reach him through a crowd. Here the Lord's remarkable gentleness should be dwelt on; he is not offended that his sermon is interrupted by the grim spectacle, does not attack the bearers' forwardness, but approves their trust. 'When he saw their faith,'[927] says the evangelist. What? Did he not see their faith before they lowered the paralytic? Obviously he saw it, for what does he not see to whose eyes the greatest secrets of the heart are patent?[928] But the evangelist, speaking in human fashion about Christ, says that he saw it after it became clear to everyone; thus God in Genesis: 'Now I know that you fear the Lord.'[929] The Lord could have saved the paralytic even if he stayed outside. But this was done deliberately so that the paralytic, being shut out and then let down into the house through the roof tiles, should make apparent to that audience how much power unwavering faith[930] has in God's eyes and show at the same time that there was a divine nature in Christ. For the large throng had assembled not only from all the villages of Galilee but also from the towns of Judaea and even from Jerusalem itself,[931] and not only a crowd of common people but of Pharisees too and teachers of the Law. Here will arise the wonderful commonplace about the great power that faith possesses, after the faith of the bearers was so pleasing to Christ that he saved the wretched man because of it, for we have nothing explicit about the faith of the paralytic, since that disease usually induces a mental stupor as well. But the bearers had a manifold faith in

* * * * *

925 Luke 7:37–50
926 Erasmus returns to the story of the paralytic at Mark 2:1–12. See also *Paraphrasis in Marcum* CWE 49 30–8.
927 Mark 2:5
928 Cf Ps 7:10 and Rev 2:23.
929 Gen 22:12
930 For 'unwavering faith,' cf James 1:6.
931 'Also from . . . itself': this detail is found only in Luke (5:17).

Christ, in his power, his mercy, and his gentleness, which no inconvenience caused by importuning crowds could destroy. It should also be noted here that the Lord sometimes produces miracles in response to someone else's faith, such as when he says to the chief of the synagogue who received word of his daughter's death, 'Do not be afraid, only believe,'[932] likewise when in chapter 9 of the same evangelist he says to the father of the man possessed by demons, 'If you can believe, all things are possible to someone who believes.'[933]

Again, there will be an opportunity here for *hypotyposis*, to lay before the eyes that pitiable spectacle of the paralytic lying on his cot. For the unhappy man could only lie there, no longer a man but a corpse half alive, sallow, filthy, covered with mould and decay and stinking almost in his very blankets. Here the disease will be described from medical texts and will be amplified through comparison. The very word 'paralysis' shows that the sinews are weakened by it.[934] But the sinews are the sources of motion; motion is, so to speak, the life of life itself. For what is the point of having the limbs of a body if they cannot be used? Moreover, this affliction seizes not only the external body but the tongue as well, and finally the seat of the mind itself. The mind is dazed, the memory lapses, there is no judgment, no mental vigour. Someone who lives this way lives only for his own punishment, if, however, that can be called life. Moreover, this disease in particular is the sort with which the physicians' art struggles in vain; even when they are supplying every kind of medication, they are only tormenting the wretched patient and worsening his torment, frequently hastening his death as well. It will be possible to say more at this point: the origin of this disease, the things that worsen it, and the enormous troubles it brings to a man. Then it should be compared with other extremely cruel diseases: leprosy is a hideous affliction, but it does not take away the use of one's limbs or dull the mind's vigour, and is more disgusting than agonizing; epilepsy is a fearful affliction, but it grants repose for long periods; the agonies of pleurisy are considerable but brief, inasmuch as it either despatches a man quickly or goes away and restores him to welcome good health, and is not so stubborn against doctors' remedies. He will speak similarly about other diseases – for I must not be too long-winded.

* * * * *

932 Mark 5:36; cf 5:22–43.
933 Mark 9:22
934 'Paralysis' derives from the verb παραλύω, meaning 'loosen, weaken, undo.' (Translator's note)

So the unhappy corpse is lying at Jesus' feet while the bearers watch from the roof.[935] He does not fall on his knees, does not put his hands together, does not pray – the disease had taken over all his limbs, he only lies like a corpse, and the fact that he cannot fall on his knees is all the more appealing; the fact that he cannot speak is all the more telling; in the eyes of the Merciful the affliction itself says much. Here, I ask you, consider the Lord's ready and bountiful generosity; he bestows much more than the bearers expected. For it is likely that they only expect the man to be freed from his paralysis, but the Lord, who scrutinizes the recesses of the heart, saw that the man was more sick in his soul than in his body, and many physical ailments proceed from a fault of the soul. Therefore, he first frees the man from his sins; see then the gentleness, the readiness with which he forgives all offences. He does not reveal confidences, does not rebuke, does not upbraid, does not demand punishment or satisfaction. What then? He says, 'Have faith, son; your sins are forgiven'; according to Matthew he calls him 'son,' according to Luke 'man.'[936] Before he was neither man nor son; he becomes both when his sins are forgiven. He tells him to be of good cheer, imparting consolation instead of the deserved rebuke. And when that highest Lord of all, in whom there was no stain of sin, has given us such an example, are certain men not ashamed to rage with such arrogance against those who have lapsed,[937] though they themselves are often steeped in graver sins? You see, reader, that here too there is an opening to expand on the Saviour's gentleness by a comparison with the savagery of certain priests against sinners.[938] Our goal is brevity.

There was no one in that gathering, I believe, who was clearly convinced that there was a double nature, divine and human, in Christ, for the time of professing this openly had not yet come; rather it had to be insinuated into men's minds first, by words and deeds especially. As I said, there were Pharisees at that sermon and teachers of the Law who Luke says sat as though the Lord's equals. His words, 'Your sins are forgiven,'[939] offended

* * * * *

935 Erasmus returns to Mark 2:1–12. He refers to the paralytic as a 'corpse' (*cadaver*), but his idea, stated just above, is that the paralytic is 'no longer a man but a corpse half alive.'

936 Matt 9:2; Luke 5:20

937 It is difficult to determine if Erasmus has any one in mind specifically: Girolamo Savonarola might be a possible candidate; Chomarat calls attention to Erasmus' comment on Jan Hus in *Hyperaspistes* 1 CWE 76 92–77 749.

938 For Erasmus' treatment of the technique of amplification with comparison, see above book 2 passim and book 3 passim.

939 Mark 2:5; Matt 9:2; Luke 5:20

their minds, for those words, claiming divine authority, had not been heard by their ears. They had learned from Isaiah that it is God alone who forgives sins;[940] the priests knew that they did not forgive sins but only offered victims and prayed to God to deign to forgive the wrongdoings of the people, though they themselves were prey to wrongdoings and needed expiation. Only the Lord from his own unfailing power forgives by word alone, without victims, without prayers or any expiations, this or that fault and all sins. Indeed nowhere do we read of the Lord praying when he was about to produce a miracle, because the power he had was not held on sufferance or circumscribed by certain limits but natural, his own, perpetual, and complete. Yet he does not forget his modesty. A priest who is only a man says, 'I baptize you,' 'I absolve you.' Christ does not say, 'I forgive you' but 'Your sins are forgiven'; these could be the words of a prophet announcing God's mercy. With like modesty he says, 'Your sins are forgiven' at Luke 7 to the woman who sinned.[941] And yet the Pharisees and the experts in the Law grumble at him in their silent thoughts: 'Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Only God can forgive sins. On what pretext does a man claim for himself what is properly God's?'[942] Here the commonplace will come to mind about what a malicious thing arrogant knowledge is, likewise another, that no impiety is more dangerous than one that commends itself by a display of piety. Of course it is the glory of God that motivates them, and they fasten onto the Son of God a false charge of blasphemy; knowledge of the Law arms them for making false charges, but they should have known from it that Jesus was the Messiah promised by the Law to free the Israelite people from their sins. Why do they grumble in silence? Because they feared the crowd, because their hatred had not reached its highest point. Those who now grumble within themselves are those who afterwards shout before Pilate, 'We have a Law, and according to our Law he should die'[943] and who cast at him on the cross the reproach, 'He saved others, he cannot save himself.'[944] Here too there is a commonplace, about how a mind corrupted by base desires gradually slips into greater impiety when the occasion arises and is provoked more and more even by kindnesses until it is carried away into a perverse understanding, and hatred finally bursts into madness.

* * * * *

940 Isa 43:25
941 Luke 7:48
942 Luke 5:21; Mark 2:7
943 John 19:7
944 Matt 27:42; Mark 15:31; Luke 23:35

What does the Lord do meanwhile? He continues to maintain his authority, and he shows perhaps by the evidence of his reply to their silent thoughts, which he reveals in order to heal them, that he is not just any man, for God alone is a καρδιογνώστης [knower of hearts]. He does not cast back at them the accusation of blasphemy, nor does he stir up the people against them but maintains his authority with irrefutable proofs, saying, 'Why do you have bad thoughts in your hearts? You do not believe that this man's sins have been forgiven because you do not see the state of his mind. But you thus see a paralytic. If I raise him up with a word, believe that his mind too has been healed by a word. What you do not see is greater in itself, but you value more highly what is accessible to your senses because you have the eyes of the body, you do not have the eyes of faith. Which is easier, to say: "Your sins are forgiven" or "Rise and walk"?'[945] With these words the Lord made them attentive to the coming miracle so that they could not make evasions and said, '"Your sins are forgiven" and "Rise and walk" are both very easy to say, but I shall make your eyes believe as well, so that you may know that for the Son of Man each is equally easy to do.' Here too Jesus' modesty should be noted; he does not say, 'So that you may know that I am God,' but, while asserting his divine nature by the act itself, he calls himself the Son of Man. Here, with everyone's mind and eyes waiting in expectation of a miracle, the Lord says to the paralytic, 'Rise, take your cot, and go away to your house.'[946] At once he rises eagerly, his strength intact, displaying no trace of his disease, and so far from being weak that he lifted onto his shoulders the very cot on which he had lain and carried it home; Christ's miracles are generally such that they show by the promptness of his assistance that his power is ever ready to help. The man goes away now, not mute but glorifying God. Someone might ask, 'Why is he told to go home?' So that he could proclaim Jesus to those who knew him as a paralytic and whom he had troubled with their daily attentions, and those who had been aware of his disease could be reliable witnesses of his restored health. What is more glorious than this sight? What evasion can you make here, Pharisee, or you, expert in the Law? Surely you don't still doubt that the paralytic's sins were forgiven? You are not wrong in believing that God alone forgives sins, but you should have understood from these deeds that God was concealed within this man, and you should have recognized the one that so many oracles promised and that you were awaiting. You promise others a Messiah on the basis of the Law, and you take advantage of the Law

* * * * *

945 This passage paraphrases verses of the pericope of the paralytic.
946 Mark 2:11; Matt 9:6; Luke 5:24

to accuse him falsely in person; but the obstruction of a crowd and the hatred of the Pharisees accomplished nothing except to cause Christ's divine power to be revealed by a more obvious miracle.

Meanwhile the Pharisees are silent, stricken by a more serious paralysis than had gripped the paralytic.[947] The uneducated crowd, giving a more devout interpretation to what was happening, is shaken by fear and glorifies God, who had given men such power; fear of God is a big step towards piety.[948] They see Jesus the man and do not dare conceive anything about him beyond what they see, yet from his wondrous deeds they glorify God working in the man; this emotion is far removed from the Pharisees' slander. So far we have indicated what parts in the narration itself acquire charm or emotion or forcefulness from rhetorical theory, though the reader himself will discern more on his own.

The treatment of allegory,[949] moreover, will allow even greater emotions if you declare that a paralysis of the mind is far and away more pitiable than paralysis of the body. How unhappy is the paralysis of someone who does not have hands for helping the needy but has them for plunder; who does not have limbs for the duties of charity but has them for luxury, for lust, for violence; who does not have a tongue for teaching and consoling his neighbour but has one ready for trifling, for obscenity, for disparagement; whose mind is dull to Christ's teaching, alive to what belongs to this world. He is utterly prostrate, not on a cot but in the muck of every kind of vice. He is carried by bearers not to Christ but to every kind of shame; as his bearers, moreover, he has ambition, greed, luxury, lust, envy, and hate, and meanwhile he thinks that he is living and flourishing though he is the most wretched of all. This will be an opportunity for an apostrophe:[950] 'How long do you rot in your hole, wretched man? If you cannot enter on your own feet, why don't you get yourself other bearers to carry you to Christ's eyes? Alms will carry you there and the prayers of pious men; forgiving a neighbour an injury will carry you, the faith of the church will carry you – only acknowledge your own calamity. And if you have long rotted in your vices, you have no reason to despair; you will go to a merciful physician who will tell you, "Son, your sins are forgiven: rise and walk."'

* * * * *

947 Erasmus states this, though the three Synoptic gospels relate otherwise; see eg Luke 5:26: 'And all were astonished: and they glorified God. And they were filled with fear, saying: "We have seen wonderful things today."'

948 Cf Ps 111:10 (Vulg 110:10); Prov 1:7; Ecclus 1:16.

949 Erasmus treats allegory above; see 875–6.

950 Erasmus has explained apostrophe above 719–21.

It will also be possible to add an exhortation,[951] to all Christians, and especially to bishops and pastors, to imitate Christ with all their might and, if they cannot remove physical diseases with a word, to strive to treat their neighbours' minds with salutary speech by teaching, advising, consoling, to minister to the ailing, to assist the needy, to be an advocate for the oppressed, and not to expect payment or praise from men for this but to await their reward from Christ. I leave the rest for the reader to invent, for I am afraid of seeming to have tarried longer upon this example than the nature of this project demands.

Other tropes besides those that we have mentioned are also reported in the grammarians, and there are some that have not yet found a name among rhetoricians or grammarians, for the whole of human language is packed with tropes.[952]

For that is how divine wisdom decided, so to speak, to babble to us in a most ordinary manner. Augustine thinks that what is read in Matthew, 'The thieves too blamed that very thing on him,'[953] is a ἑτέρωσις [substitution of one name for the other][954] or hypallage[955] of number, since the other evangelists report that only one reviled Christ,[956] in the way that we say, 'Roman soldier' instead of 'army,' though I am aware that some explain this passage without a trope.

Likewise, Augustine in his book *De agone christiano* indicates that there is an *enallage*[957] of time in the words of Paul when he speaks about himself

* * * * *

951 'Exhortation' is one of those specifically Christian genres of speaking, which Erasmus develops on the basis of Paul's Second Letter to Timothy (3:16 and 4:2); cf 1 Tim 5:1; Titus 1:9; Rom 12:8; 2 Cor 8:17. Just below Erasmus refers to these passages where he speaks of exhorting bishops and pastors 'teaching, advising, consoling.'

952 Cf Augustine *De doctrina chriatiana* 4.6.9–4.7.21.

953 Matt 27:44. See also Mark 15:32; Luke 23:39–43. See Augustine *De consensu evangelistarum* (*On the Harmony of the Gospels*) 3.16.53 CSEL 43; NPNF 1st series 6 204. Augustine does not identify this device as hypallage or ἑτέρωσις, though he does explain the function of this trope as Erasmus clarifies it. Cf Quintilian 8.6.23: 'It is but a short step from *synecdochè* to *metonymy*, which consists in the substitution of one name for another, and, as Cicero tells us, is called *hypallage* by the rhetoricians.' See Cicero *Orator* 27.93.

954 The normal form of the word is ἑτεροίωσις (cf Quintilian 9.3.12); that used by Erasmus probably comes from a corrupted reading in whatever text he used of Quintilian. (Translator's note)

955 For hypallage, see Lausberg §§515, 685.2.

956 Chomarat rightly notes that only Luke reports this; see ASD V-5 177 at line 501.

957 For enallage, see Lausberg §685.2.

and other living Christians and says, 'Who made us sit together with Christ among the heavens,'[958] and we commonly express as done what we believe will surely be done: 'If you show such courage in battle, we have won,' 'If you are able to persuade the king of that, you have escaped.' 'You are dust and into dust you will return,' which is found at Genesis 3,[959] seems to belong to this trope, for Adam was not now dust; otherwise how could it be said that he would return into what he was?

Though here it could seem a case of synecdoche,[960] which uses the name of the material to designate something made from the material, in the way that we say 'steel' instead of 'sword'[961] and call nets made from linen 'linens.' The same trope is found in what is said about Eve at Genesis 2, 'This bone now from my bones,'[962] not because she was now bone but because she was made from bone. In a similar manner what was now a serpent is still called a rod at Exodus 7 because it was changed from a rod: 'The rod of Moses devoured the rods of the magicians,'[963] it says.

Again, Jerome noted on Matthew that there is a ἑτέρωσις of time when Simon is called leprous because he had been,[964] and in Paul Erastus is called the city's treasurer;[965] and Abigail is still called the wife of Nabal though she had already passed into marriage to David on Nabal's death.[966]

Moreover, the name Jacob and Israel is used in many passages of Scripture for the nation sprung from him, such as in Isaiah, 'But Israel did not know me,'[967] likewise Matthew 9, 'Nothing like this was ever seen

* * * * *

958 Eph 2:6. See Augustine *De agone christiano* (*On the Christian Struggle*) CSEL 41 99–138; WSA I-10.

959 Gen 3:19

960 See Quintilian 8.6.20: '*Synecdoche* has the power to give variety to our language by making us realise many things from one, the whole from a part, the *genus* from a species, things which follow from things which have preceded; or, on the other hand, the whole procedure may be reversed.'

961 Quintilian 8.6.20

962 Gen 2:23

963 Exod 7:12

964 See Matt 26:6; Jerome *Commentarii in evangelium Matthaei* 4.995–1007 CCSL 77 246. Jerome does not say there is a ἑτέρωσις in this passage, though he gives the idea: '... Simon the leper, not because he remained leprous at that time but who before had been leprous was healed by the Saviour; the first name remained so that the power of the one curing should be manifest.'

965 Rom 16:23. See *Annotationes in Romanos* CWE 56 432 and the editor's notes on Erasmus' comments.

966 See 1 Sam 27:3, 30:5; 2 Sam 2:2.

967 Isa 1:3

in Israel,'[968] and in the Song of the Virgin,[969] 'He has received Israel his servant,'[970] likewise at Psalm 78, 'They have devoured Jacob and have desolated his place.'[971]

The following belongs to some type of synecdoche: 'For it is not you who are speaking but the spirit of your father that speaks in you.'[972] Luke gives abundant evidence in Acts that the apostles spoke, but by a trope a person on whose authority and by whose gift a man speaks is said to be the speaker. The following belongs to this form: 'My words are not my own but of him who sent me';[973] the trope indicates the source, for elsewhere the Lord often calls his words his own. Augustine noted on Psalm 4 that it is the custom of Scripture to attribute to God himself what he does within us.[974] They want the words of Paul at Romans 8, 'The Spirit itself entreats for us with indescribable groans,'[975] to be of this sort, for groaning does not befit the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, 'I have strengthened its columns,'[976] which we read in Psalm 74, is undoubtedly a metaphor for the earth, which is balanced on its own weight and does not rest upon columns, but Scripture calls its unshaken stability 'columns,' as Ambrose notes.[977]

I think that when the Lord says in the Gospel, 'I do not know you'[978] to those placed on his left,[979] this too is an example of synecdoche, and it is not

* * * * *

968 Matt 9:33
969 Luke 1:54. The Song of the Virgin (*Canticum Virginis*) is customarily called 'The Magnificat' (Luke 1:46–55).
970 'Received' (*recepit*) is the reading of the Vulgate ('He hath received Israel his servant, being mindful of his mercy' DV). Erasmus says in the *Annotationes* that the meaning of the Greek is 'come to the help of,' hence AV's *holpen*: 'He hath holpen his servant Israel in remembrance of [his] mercy' (Luke 1:54). The Latin verb, as well as meaning 'received,' can also have the sense 'supported,' which is probably what Erasmus intended here. (A. Dalzell)
971 Ps 79:7 (Vulg 78:7)
972 Matt 10:20
973 John 12:49
974 See Augustine *Enarratio in psalmum* (*Exposition of the Psalms*) CCSL 38 14, 4.2 WSA III-15 86.
975 Rom 8:26
976 Ps 75:3 (Vulg 74:4)
977 Ambrose *Exameron* (*The Six Days of Creation*) 1.6.22 CSEL 32 19, *De paradiso* (*Paradise*) CSEL 32/1 265–336, *De Cain et Abel* (*Cain and Abel*) CSEL 32/1 339–409; FOC 42 trans John J. Savage 20–3.
978 Matt 7:23
979 Matt 25:41

necessary to interpret 'know' here as 'have made,' as Augustine does in letter 47 to Valerian, saying, 'What is "I do not know you" but "I did not make you the way you are"?'[980] He thinks that when we say about Christ that he did not know sin,[981] that is, had not done it, this is a case of the same figure. In fact the way that Scripture speaks is to say that God knows what he approves, does not know what he disapproves. Thus a psalm says, 'The Lord knows the way of the just,'[982] as though he does not know the way of the wicked; likewise, the foolish virgins are told at Matthew 25, 'I do not know you.'[983] The same trope was used in saying to Jeremiah, 'Before I shaped you in the womb I knew you.'[984] The truth of this is confirmed by what follows, 'And before you exited from the womb I consecrated you';[985] 'I consecrated' is a sort of explanatory gloss on the previous 'I knew.' Again, at 2 Timothy 2, 'The Lord knows those who are his,'[986] likewise at 1 Corinthians 14, 'But if someone does not know, he will not be known.'[987] In fact we are commonly said not to know the things from which we shrink; for example, 'The grace of the Holy Spirit does not know slow efforts,'[988] and 'Someone who is sincerely a friend does not know how to flatter.'[989] Finally, it is our friends, not our enemies, that we call 'known.' We say that we do not know those whom we hate resolutely without hope of returning to favour. Moreover, 'He does not know sin'[990] was said more meaningfully about Christ than if it had said, 'He did not do' or 'did not commit sin.'

It is a type of synecdoche when we give the name of an effect to the efficient cause or the other way around, such as when we say that someone who is cold is shivering, that someone who is afraid is going pale, that someone who is ashamed is turning red even if he is not changing colour,

* * * * *

980 Augustine Ep 215.6 PL 33 973; *Letters* (211–70) (1*–29*) WSA II-4 42–3. The letter is now numbered 215 (Erasmus' edition 47) and is addressed to Valentine (not Valerian), abbot of Hadrumentum.
981 Cf 2 Cor 5:21
982 Ps 1:6
983 Matt 25:12
984 Jer 1:5
985 Jer 1:5
986 2 Tim 2:19
987 1 Cor 14:38
988 This phrase is from Ambrose *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam* (2:19) CCSL 14 39
989 Cf *Adagia* II ix 53 *Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit* 'Flattery wins friends and truth engenders hate.' Erasmus explains the meaning of the adage, which carries the sense of the saying here.
990 2 Cor 5:21

that someone who is uncontrollably in love is said to be dying, and we are said to recoil from those we hate; on the other hand, we admit and embrace those whom we know. In addition, in a gospel parable a hostile person is said to have done what the devil did, and the Lord himself expounds it in this way;[991] but the devil is not a person. Though it is possible for there to be an allegory here, it can be a type of synecdoche, which puts the name of the sign for the thing designated, so that 'is' has the same force as 'signifies.' This is the trope used in the words at Genesis 41, 'The seven ears are seven years of plenty; the seven cattle are seven years of famine.'[992] With the same figure, it was Paul who said this: 'But the rock was Christ,'[993] for he calls it 'spiritual'[994] because it signified something very sacred; likewise, the Lord in the Gospel, 'The sons of rebirth are the good seed, but the evil sons are the darnel.'[995] Thus we say of a wicked deed, 'This is your impudence,' though the deed is not impudence but shows it and derives from it, just as Scripture sometimes designates sin with the name concupiscence, not because all concupiscence is sin but because it derives from sin.[996] Thus sin is ascribed to infants not because there is any sin properly speaking in them but only the deprivation of original grace, a natural proclivity towards sinning, and the calamity of human life is called sin because these things derive from the sin of our first parents, though I know that certain persons have different opinions on this subject.[997] Besides, when the Apostle writes to the Corinthians, 'For our sake he made him who did not know sin to be sin,'[998] the meaning is ridiculous and impious if you do not acknowledge a

* * * * *

991 See Matt 13:24–39, the parable of the wheat and the darnel, where Christ's words are 'An enemy [*inimicus homo*] has done this' (13:25) and 'The enemy who sowed them is the devil' (13:39).

992 See Gen 41:26–7.

993 1 Cor 10:4

994 1 Cor 10:3–4

995 Matt 13:38

996 See Rom 7:7–8 and *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 42–3.

997 See *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 34 and *Annotationes in Romanos* 5:12 CWE 56 139–61. Erasmus devotes a lengthy section to the interpretation of this crucial passage (Rom 5:12), which provides the theological basis for the doctrine of Original Sin; the passage, as Erasmus shows, has also been the source of much rancour among theologians. See also *Paraphrasis in Iacobum* 1:15 CWE 44 140–4. Erasmus, perhaps tactfully here, avoids further discussion of this issue, which in the years the *Ecclesiastes* was published would occasion frequent disputes about the orthodoxy of many preachers' views on sin, grace, and justification.

998 2 Cor 5:21

trope; but when he says through a trope, 'He made sin,'[999] he means a victim to be sacrificed for the sins of others. Similar is 'You eat up the sins of the people,'[1000] which was said to the priests because they live off sacrificial victims. Moreover, as to Paul saying that he did not receive his Gospel from man or through man,[1001] the plain language expresses a blasphemous sense, for Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father is still a man; but you could hardly find a name for this trope. What he writes to the Galatians is similar, 'If I were still pleasing men, I would not be Christ's servant,'[1002] but Paul also writes to the Corinthians, 'As I please everyone in everything.'[1003] In the former passage he said *placere* [please] in the sense 'agree with' and 'men' meaning 'those devoid of Christ's spirit'; in the latter passage he used *placere* to mean 'comply with and oblige,' to avoid offending anyone.

Why should I mention here the language with which the holy books, especially of the Old Testament, abound everywhere, through which things that appertain either physically or mentally to us are attributed to God, such as when he is said to grow angry, rage, regret, hate, forget, remember, take notice, avert his face, extend his arm, sit, rise, incline his ear, and countless other things of this sort, which have a false and impious meaning if you take them in their simple sense? But how these are to be understood is expounded clearly by Gregory of Nazianzus in book 5 of his *Theologia*[1004] and by Augustine in the second book of *Ad Simplicianum* and elsewhere,[1005] taking a quite different view from those who think that tropes, as matters of little importance, should be left to teachers of language as being unworthy of theologians. But that great man Augustine thinks that they merit vigilant attention and memorization because, as he says, 'The knowledge of these is' especially 'necessary for resolving the ambiguities of Scripture.'[1006]

* * * * *

999 Erasmus is referring to and using the words of the passage just above, 2 Cor 5:21: *eum qui non noverat peccatum, pro nobis peccatum fecit*.

1000 Hos 4:8

1001 Gal 1:12

1002 Gal 1:10

1003 1 Cor 10:33

1004 Gregory of Nazianzus *Oration* 31; see Nazianzus 117–43. See book 2 491 n119.

1005 Augustine *Ad Simplicianum* in *Logik des Schreckens: Augustinus von Hippo Die Gnadenlehre von 397, Verschiedene Probleme, an Simplician I 2* 2nd ed, ed Kurt Flasch (Mainz 1995) 147–239; CCSL 44 4–56. 'Miscellany of Questions in Response to Simplician' in WSA I-12 159–231, 208–31 (second book).

1006 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.29.40

A certain theologian of wide renown, a Franciscan by profession, now also a bishop with a rich purse,[1007] one day – not on some convivial occasion but during a public sermon attended by a large crowd – mocked my occasional indications in the *Annotationes* of how hyperbata[1008] should be remedied, as follows: 'What is Erasmus teaching us? He is teaching us to construe. I learned to construe forty years ago,' thus mocking at the same time Origen, Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustine, who frequently indicate the order of words in the text and, even more petty than this, advise where a hypostigme, a mark indicating a new breath, should be put, what case a word should be taken to be in, and whether a sentence is to be pronounced as a statement or as a question, things that Augustine discusses carefully in book 3 of *De doctrina christiana*.[1009] When I replied at our get-together that what he was citing had been said by way of hyperbole, the other fellow said, with a bit of a sneer, 'What indeed is hyperbole?' That utterance showed sufficiently how much effort he had devoted to poring over those great Doctors of the church, though he considered himself a consummate theologian nonetheless.

It is agreed, then, that canonical Scripture is cloaked in types, figures, and tropes. But no trope and no figure gives preachers more difficulty than allegory, which must now be discussed more precisely and will be discussed after we first advise that the preacher's special aim should be never to diverge from the genuine meaning of Scripture, which, it is agreed, is varied by other tropes, in addition to those that we have reviewed. On these one can in general give the instruction that a trope should not be introduced if the plain language has a pious and sound meaning that fits with other passages of Scripture and unless the trope that is applied serves that straightforward meaning. For example, when we hear God saying, 'I regret that I made man,'[1010] or when we read of God's arm, face, ears, and feet,[1011] a trope needs to be brought in since the plain sense is obviously ridiculous,

* * * * *

1007 Though Chomarat is not able to identify this individual (see ASD V-5 181 602n), he must surely be Henry Standish, a Franciscan, a popular preacher, bishop of St Asaph, and a persistent critic of Erasmus. There is a similar tale told in the *Ratio* 268; Ep 337:709–18; *Adagia* II v 98, and the annotation of Jerome's letter CWE 61 218–19. See CEBR III 279–80. (A. Dalzell)

1008 For 'hyperbata,' see Quintilian 8.6.62, and 725 n5 above.

1009 *De doctrina christiana* 3

1010 Gen 6:7; see 955 below.

1011 Eg Ps 77:15 (Vulg 76:16) arm; Ps 67:1 (Vulg 67:1) face; Ps 71:2 (Vulg 70:2) ear; Ps 132:7 (Vulg 131:7) feet

because Scripture pronounces openly that God is spirit[1012] and that no human emotion befalls him because he is unchangeable being; 'I am who I am,'[1013] he says, though that ridiculous meaning, if we want to speak properly, belongs not to Scripture but to the words according to their simple understanding. But when the Lord, handing the bread to the apostles, says, 'Take; this is my body, which is given for you,'[1014] if you take 'is' through

* * * * *

1012 Cf John 4:24.

1013 Exod 3:14. See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 1.32.35.

1014 Matt 26:26; cf Mark 14:22 and Luke 22:19. Erasmus' quotation of Jesus' words instituting the Eucharist does not cite verbatim any of the four the evangelists; nor is he citing verbatim the words of consecration as spoken by the priest at mass: *Accipite, et manducate ex hoc omnes. Hoc est enim corpus meum*. Erasmus is likely referring to the many interpretations of Jesus' words of institution, which had evoked heated controversies since the time of Berengar of Tours (c 1000–88). At the time of the *Ecclesiastes*' publication, controversies over these passages were again raging. Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531), Johannes Oecolampadius (1482–1531), and Conradus Pellicanus (1478–1556) are perhaps best known for the denial of the real presence in the Eucharist. Erasmus knew Oecolampadius well because of his work for Froben and the assistance he gave Erasmus with his edition of the New Testament (1516), and Pelican for his assistance on Jerome and other patristic editions. Despite Oecolampadius' teaching and the radical ecclesiastical changes he introduced at Basel after 1528, Erasmus was on friendly terms with him when he left Basel for Freiburg in 1529. From this passage Erasmus obviously holds to the teaching on the real presence, though without including the word transubstantiation here. His remarks on 'signifying the indissoluble unity of me' suggest an understanding wherein the symbol itself (the bread) wholly becomes the reality it signifies. Cf *De concordia* CWE 65 211: 'It is the actual body and blood of the Lord which is present in the sacrament, and certainly the living body.' Erasmus did not subscribe to Oecolampadius' teaching on the Eucharist, as he makes clear in his succinct letter to the town council of Basel in October 1525; see Ep 1636 and Ep 1737 to Conradus Pellicanus, Basel, c 27 August 1526; see also Ep 1674:44–5. Despite the falling out between Pellicanus and Erasmus in 1526 (see Ep 1644, renumbered to Ep 1792A), Pellicanus resumed contact with Erasmus shortly before the latter's death in July 1536; see Pellicanus' letter to Erasmus (Zurich, 18 November 1535), Allen Ep 3072; and 'Conradus Pellicanus' CEBR III 65–6. For Oecolampadius, see especially ASD VI-5 39 255n; 'Johannes Oecolampadius' CEBR III 24–7; and S.M. Foley 'Erasmus and the Sacramentarians' in *Complete Works of St Thomas More* ed S.M. Foley and C.H. Miller (New Haven and London 1985) 11:xxxvii–xlvii. See also 'Transubstantiation' ODCC 1637. Cf McConica 'Grammar of Consent' 81. Erasmus contributed further to the controversy with his dedicatory Ep 2284 to Balthasar Merklin, bishop of Hildesheim, Freiburg, 25 March 1530, for his edition of the treatise *De veritate*

a trope as meaning 'signified,' or if you take 'body' as 'a sign of the body,' there will be no lack of people to oppose your interpretation. But if you take it as 'This symbol, which I show to you, signifies the indissoluble unity of me, the head, and my mystical body, which is the church,' the trope serves the plain meaning and should not be rejected.[1015]

Now, there are certain words or locutions peculiar to Scripture, such as 'build' for 'help,' 'destroy' for 'harm,' 'please' for 'seek out praise,' and there are some employed in a variety of ways, such as 'law,' 'flesh,' 'spirit,' 'world';[1016] there are also certain idioms of language that need to be recognized lest the bare words produce a ridiculous meaning. Meanwhile, ambiguity or obscurity or contradiction torments the reader even in the straightforward utterances. In all of these the preacher's constant prayer and goal should be to achieve the genuine meaning,[1017] whether from an interpretation of the ancients, or from an alert and discerning comparison of passages, or from a consideration of times and persons, or from the tenor of what precedes and what follows, or from the sources of Scripture[1018] themselves or their various interpretations, or from daily meditation, or from honest prayer joined with faith. Moreover, let him shun the emotion of those who lord it over Scripture, grabbing it by the neck and twisting it to the meaning that they themselves bring to it,[1019] and do it either for the sake of glory (they are disappointed only if they produce something that has been said by others) or from an eagerness to win or from a certain inattention, when they handle Holy Writ as though they were handling the works of some ordinary man. St Paul professes in many passages that he is the steward and dispenser of God's mysteries,[1020] but that faithfulness is

* * * * *

corporis et sanguinis Dominici in Eucharistia (Freiburg: Jo. Faber Emmeus 1530), written by Alger (d c 1131), a *scholasticus* at St Bartholomew's in Liège, who became a monk at Cluny. See also Allen's introduction.

1015 Cf John 6:23–64, especially 6:35, 57; see *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 80–8, especially 83.

1016 Eg 1 Cor 8:1 (build); 2 Cor 10:8 (destroy); Gal 1:10 (please); for 'law,' 'flesh,' 'spirit,' 'world,' see 908, 953–4, 978, and passim below.

1017 This sentence fittingly sums up Erasmus' lifelong labour: 'The preacher's constant prayer and goal should be to achieve the genuine meaning' (of Scripture).

1018 In Chomarat's interpretation 'Scripture' means the New Testament, and he believes that Erasmus understands the Old Testament as sources for the New Testament (ASD V-5 185 644n). The Latin, however, could mean 'scriptural sources,' ie Scripture as a useful tool for understanding Scripture (ie both Old and New Testament). (A. Dalzell)

1019 'Grabbing it by the neck and twisting it' (*obtorto collo*); see *Adagia* IV ix 50.

1020 Eg 2 Cor 6:4 and Titus 1:7

especially required in those who dispense, since they are handling something that belongs not to them but to the Lord;[1021] and he says elsewhere that he was separated from Judaism through God's mercy for the preaching of the gospel so that he would be faithful.[1022] But in challenging Timothy, his most beloved son in Christ, to imitate himself, he urges that in his evangelical teaching he should present himself to God, whose business he was conducting, a workman approved and ἀνεπαίσχυντος [having no cause to be ashamed],[1023] that is, someone who does not blush to profess Christ's philosophy before everyone though it seem foolishness or insanity to the world,[1024] and someone who handles the truth with such correctness that he brings no hatred or disgrace to the gospel through his own fault.

There are two ways in which that is usually incurred: if a preacher of tainted character detracts from the credibility of sound teaching,[1025] or he twists Scripture into inappropriate meanings and accommodates it to human feelings.[1026] Each is a grave offence, but the latter is more dangerous inasmuch as Paul is not so angry at those who preached the gospel either for their own profit or to stir up hatred for Paul so long as they otherwise proclaim Christ sincerely.[1027] Many are alienated by a teacher's openly wicked life, but those who are more fair-minded reflect that Christ said, 'The scribes and Pharisees sit in the chair of Moses; do what they say, do not do what

* * * * *

1021 Cf 2 Cor 4:5–7.

1022 Rom 1:1; cf *Annotationes in Romanos* CWE 56 7–8 and *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 15.

1023 2 Tim 2:15

1024 See 1 Cor 1:23–5.

1025 Erasmus' words evoke Quintilian's teaching on the moral goodness of the orator (*vir bonus dicendi peritus*); see Quintilian 12.1.3: 'For I do not merely assert that the ideal orator should be a good man, but I affirm that no man can be an orator unless he is a good man.' See too 12.1.1: 'The orator then, whom I am concerned to form, shall be the orator as defined by Marcus Cato, "a good man, skilled in speaking."'

1026 Erasmus clearly has St Paul's admonitions in mind; see eg 2 Tim 4:1–4 and 2 Tim 2:14–19. But he also would find similar admonitions in Augustine's writings against 'twisting the sense' (*detorquere sensum*); cf *De doctrina christiana* 2.7.11. Erasmus' admonitions will be echoed clearly in the many instructions for preachers that appear from the mid-sixteenth century on. For the admonition against 'twisting' the sense of scripture, see eg Carlo Borromeo *Constitutiones et decreta condita in provinciali synodo Mediolanensi* (Venice: Aldus 1566) 30 (also in Mansi 34:8–10). On instructions for preachers, see McGinness *Right Thinking* 33–49.

1027 Cf Phil 1:15–18.

they do';[1028] and if the teacher's crimes are too obvious to be excused, yet they minimize them or think to themselves, 'He is human: if he is bad now, perhaps he will be good tomorrow; I embrace Christ's teaching whatever the mouth through which the Lord reveals it to me.' That heavenly truth cannot be stained by anyone's character. But those who twist Scripture to suit human sensibilities utterly destroy its authority by making it human instead of divine. Moreover, it happens that, once their imposture has been discovered, they lack credibility even when they teach correctly and sincerely. If that should take place by design, it is a detestable impiety and an accursed blasphemy against the spirit of Christ, which is pardoned neither in this world nor in the one to come.[1029] This is the point that heretics generally reach when, with their increasing stubbornness, they finally surrender to a perverse understanding and in their obstinate wickedness shun no crime so long as they retain the unlucky domain that they have seized. But if the same thing should happen through human ignorance or carelessness or even from pious zeal, one should approve the sound intention, correct the error, rouse negligence from its sleep, and forgive what has been committed from a desire to help a neighbour. No one is not caught from time to time in this first fault, for no one since the apostles has been so learned and trained in the Scriptures that there is nothing left for him to learn. Likewise, no one is so alert that he does not nod off from time to time through human frailty. Even the holiest teachers of the church have sometimes allowed themselves liberty in the third, especially those who governed themselves by Origen's example;[1030] among them are Ambrose and Jerome. The other Greeks used this licence more sparingly and more modestly; but an opportunity to discuss them will arise later.[1031]

I think it worthwhile now to indicate some words in which more modern authorities have permitted themselves some liberty, whether someone wants to attribute it to ignorance or to thoughtlessness or to pious zeal, or to defend or extenuate it on any other grounds at all. These words are everywhere to hand in sacred writings: 'world,' 'religion,' 'religious,' 'holy,'

* * * * *

1028 Matt 23:2–3; the quotation is not verbatim.

1029 Erasmus equates the abuse of 'twisting the sense of Scripture' with the sin against the Holy Spirit, for which there was no forgiveness in this world or the next; see Matt 12:31–2. Chomarat notes here Erasmus' identification of the 'spirit of Christ' with 'the Holy Spirit'; see ASD V-5 185 675–6n.

1030 Erasmus speaks below of Origen's excesses in the allegorical sense of Scripture; see 916–19.

1031 See 916 below.

'brother,' 'obedience,' 'apostasy,' 'perfection,' 'alms,' 'poverty,' and to others like them, which we see turned through many centuries, I will not ascribe an impious meaning, but at least one quite incompatible with the genuine meaning of the Spirit.

Everyone knows what 'world' is in its original significance.[1032] But when Scripture says, 'And the world knew him not,'[1033] 'I have chosen you from the world,'[1034] 'If you were of the world, the world would love what was its own,'[1035] 'If the world hates you, know that it held me in hatred before you,'[1036] 'The whole world has been placed in wickedness,'[1037] likewise when Paul calls impious demons 'rulers of this world,'[1038] whenever Scripture speaks in this manner, I say, it does not condemn the world created by God or the people that live in this world but the perverse love for the things of this mortal life, whose concomitant is lack of trust in God, neglect of everlasting life and of all the virtues that take us there. Moreover, this world cannot be pointed out with the fingers, because it is located in minds and in the inner emotions rather than in celibacy or in food and clothing for the body.

Many, therefore, misuse this word when, because they have professed the rule of Francis or Benedict, they say that they have renounced the world and proclaim themselves dead to the world and rather insultingly call others worldly and secular, despite the fact that this is the common profession of all Christians who in baptism renounce the world and its master Satan and all his pomps and pleasures. Those who love the things of this world are worldly by whatever name they are called, whatever robe they are covered with, whatever food or drink they use to satisfy nature's need. Those who have mortified 'their earthly members'[1039] and seek what is above and, having been spiritually renewed with Christ, have about them the odour of heavenly things are truly dead to the world, just as the Apostle boasts, 'To me the world has been crucified, and I to the world.'[1040] But what are those 'earthly members' that St Paul bids be 'mortified'? They are all the

* * * * *

1032 For 'world,' cf John 1:9–10, 3:17 and 19, 7:7, 8:23. See especially *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 13–24.
1033 John 1:10
1034 John 15:19
1035 Cf John 15:19.
1036 John 15:18
1037 1 John 5:19
1038 Eph 6:12
1039 Col 3:5
1040 Gal 6:14

emotions and actions that clash with the spirit of Christ, some of which the Apostle identifies by name: whoring, filthiness, lust, evil covetousness, greed, anger, resentment, malice, cursing, obscene language, lying, ambition (for this can be understood under the heading of greed).[1041] Whoever has subdued, destroyed, and extinguished these and similar emotions (for the Apostle did not list them all) through the spirit of Christ and instead of them has living within him mercy, kindness, humility, modesty, patience, forgiveness, and charity[1042] alone can boast with Paul[1043] or, more safely, thank God that the world is crucified to him and he to the world. But if a religious profession allows us to be called 'dead to the world,' this is assuredly shared by all Christians; on the other hand, if subduing the rebellion of evil desires allows it, let monks examine themselves and ask whether their minds are free of these emotions, and let them not vaunt themselves before men, lest by boasting they lose their treasure, but thank God within themselves so that they may progress, for not everyone can proclaim of himself, as Paul does, 'I have finished the course, I have kept faith,'[1044] etc. At least let them not slander other Christians, since there is no kind of life in which a man should not and cannot be dead to the world, for those who cherish this world, whatever title they flaunt, have been touched in vain by the bath of regeneration.[1045] Some do not deny this but claim that this title fits monks in particular because they have renounced certain things permitted to others, expressly for the purpose of being able to extinguish the passions of the flesh the more easily by removing from them the matter by which they are usually either nourished or stirred up again. Let them demonstrate this excellence rather than boast of it and show themselves such in everything so that people may understand that they are truly dead to the world and may be kindled by their examples towards the pursuit of perfection; but let them hold a modest opinion and speak modestly of themselves. But if we look not at what is provided but at what ought to be provided, this title fits no one better than bishops, cardinals, and popes, who take the roles closest to Christ, than whom no mortal was more dead to this world.

Moreover, another difficulty also follows from the misuse of this term. 'And what is that?' you say. When they hear that only monks and nuns are called dead to the world, the laity and even priests who are free of monastic

* * * * *

1041 Cf Gal 5:19–21.
1042 Cf Gal 5:22.
1043 Cf Gal 6:14.
1044 2 Tim 4:7
1045 Cf Titus 3:5.

rules think that what Scripture imparts about mortifying the emotions does not apply to them, and they judge that they are permitted to love the things that are of this world. But it would contribute more to inspiring godliness in everyone if they regarded what the mystical books teach about spiritual death as pertaining not only to monks or to priests or bishops but to princes as well, to soldiers, to married people, in short to everyone who has professed scorn for the world and Satan in baptism. Now this death is claimed for monks not only in popular custom but in papal decrees as well, to the extent that it even sunders a marriage too so long as it is ratified but not consummated by the commingling of bodies, even against the opposition of either party. Just as physical death, they say, dissolves every bond of marriage, so spiritual death dissolves even true and complete marriage if there has been no connubial congress.[1046] It is not for me to tear up the decisions of popes or theologians, but I do think that this is one article where a more precise discussion would be useful.

The Apostle calls all those initiated into the gospel *sancti* [holy or saintly][1047] not because they are all free of vice but because they have been sealed with and, so to speak, dedicated to Christ in baptism, wherefore even places and vessels are called *sacra* [sacred] and *sancta* [holy]. And the use of this title persisted up to the time of St Augustine, for just as St Paul, in a mark of respect, calls those reborn in Christ 'holy,' so they used to call every Christian 'holy' and 'brother' as a mark of respect. Now the only people we call *sancti* are those whose memory the church reveres religiously or those who have been elevated to sainthood by papal authority, and I suspect that some today are venerated as saints because they are called *sancti* in the works of the ancients,[1048] such as when Jerome as a mark of respect calls Epiphanius *sanctus* because he was a Christian.[1049]

* * * * *

1046 Erasmus offers a lengthy discussion of this and related questions; see *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 259–65. See especially Erasmus' extensive comments on 1 Cor 7:39 where he urges the possibility of divorce in certain cases; see *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* 7:39 ASD VI-8 144–90, especially 184–90.

1047 See eg Rom 1:7, 15:25; 1 Cor 1:2; Col 1:2, 4.

1048 *Sanctus*, translated here as 'holy,' is also the normal word for 'saint'; for 'saint' Erasmus here uses *divus*, well established in this sense in the Renaissance but originally used of deified human beings, especially Roman emperors, beginning with *divus Iulius*, the deified Julius Caesar.

1049 Jerome refers to Bishop Epiphanius as 'holy' (*sanctus*); see eg *Commentarii in Ezechielem* 9.28 CCSL 75 394: *super quibus et vir sanctus Epiphanius episcopus proprium volumen mihi praesens tradidit*. Jerome also uses the term to address some individuals in his letters; see eg Ep 17.3 *Ad Marcum* (to Mark, a priest at Chalcis) CSEL 54 72 (*venerabilis et sancte pater*); see also Ep 102.3 *Ad Augustinum* (to Augustine) CSEL 55 236 and Ep 103.2 *Ad Augustinum* (to Augustine) CSEL 55

Likewise the lovable title of 'brothers,' which was once shared by all Christians, has now been limited to a few through usurpation and has almost become an insult instead of an honorific. The Jews used the term 'brothers' only for men of their own race and people; they did not deem others worthy of the same title, but Paul and the other apostles extended this appellation of honour and of love to the men of all nations who professed the religion of Christ. I am not criticizing the fact that monks call each other 'brothers,' but the fact that they do not deem others worthy of the same title is perhaps not blameless since every Christian is brother to a Christian, and the φιλαδελφία [brotherly love] so often commended by the Apostle should be among them all.[1050] All the less should one approve those who join together in special associations and call each other 'brothers.' If someone who was at Jerusalem, where you were once, is your brother, how much more justly should you consider as a brother someone who was reborn in the same water as you, devoted to the same Christ through the same faith, initiated into the same sacraments, grafted onto the same body, which is the church, and called to the same inheritance.[1051] If St Antony, Cornelius, or George wins brothers,[1052] Christ of course is greater than all of these.

The word 'religion' has been restricted through similar misuse.[1053] True religion is to observe with trembling the commands that God has given us

* * * * *

238; see also Epp 115, 134, 138, 151, 152, 155. For Epiphanius, see 'Epiphanius, Saint' ODCC 553.

1050 Rom 12:10; 1 Thess 4:9; Heb 13:1

1051 Cf Heb 9:15.

1052 Erasmus refers to the confraternities that have adopted these saints as their patrons. St Antony is regarded as the founder of the Christian monastic movement, according to St Athanasius' *Life of Saint Antony*. Pope Cornelius I (251–3) died in the persecution of Decius; see *Legenda aurea* II 158–9. St George, patron saint of England, was patron of the Order of the Garter, founded by King Edward III. For St George, see 'George' ODS 213–4 and *Legenda aurea* I 238–42. It is likely too that Erasmus has in mind the many confraternities springing up at that time in Italy, the Low Countries, and elsewhere; see Konrad Eisenbichler 'Italian Youth Confraternities in an Age of Reform' in *Confraternities and Catholic Reform in Italy, France, and Spain* ed John Patrick Donnelly and Michael W. Maher (Kirksville, Mo 1999) 27–44; and Paul Trio 'Lay Persons in Power: The Crumbling of the Clerical Monopoly on Urban Devotion in Flanders, as a Result of the Rise of Lay Confraternities in the Late Middle Ages' in *Early Modern Confraternities in Europe and the Americas* ed Christopher Black and Pamela Gravestock (Aldershot 2006) 53–63.

1053 Here Erasmus picks up a theme explored first in Lorenzo Valla's *De professione religiosorum*, and also by Erasmus in *Moria*, where Folly uses the

and, as St James teaches, 'to visit orphans and widows in their affliction,' words that contain all the duties of charity towards one's neighbour, and 'to keep oneself unstained,' he says, 'by this age' (he calls 'age' what John calls the 'world'); [1054] but all Christians, whatever their nation, status, or rank, have professed this obligation. Accordingly, those who call monks 'religious' are behaving courteously, attributing to them what they ought to be (and perhaps are), but those who call themselves religious just because they have sworn allegiance to the rule of Benedict or Francis (for these alone among the Latins have written a rule)[1055] are behaving presumptuously, in my opinion at least, for there is no difference between saying, 'I am religious' or saying, 'I am pious,' 'I am holy.' But who would put up with someone speaking this way? If professing a way of life that Benedict or Francis imparted or a garment that they prescribed (if in fact those pious men, neither of whom excelled in scriptural learning, prescribed any specific garment) enables a man to be called religious, how much more justly will it be guaranteed by a profession in which we have all pledged ourselves to Christ the Redeemer by the sacred font. But if the honour of this title is to be assigned to the merits of someone's life, let us not look at a man's robe or cincture, but let us in our words and deeds show contempt for honours, scorn for money, modesty in words, kindness towards the needy, mercy towards wrongdoers, a charitable disposition towards all. Therefore, 'We are religious, we are dead to the world' are arrogant words, no more tolerable than if they said, 'We are holy, we are perfect.' But insult as well is added to arrogance when they deny that priests dissociated from monasticism and the laity are religious but call them worldly and secular, since being worldly or secular and being Christian are diametrically opposed. Now, it is the nature of true religion

* * * * *

word 'religion' for 'monasticism.' See *Moria* CWE 27 130–5: 'The happiness of these people [scholastic theologians] is most nearly approached by those who are popularly called "religious" or "monks."' Both names are false, since most of them are a long way removed from religion . . .' (130). See Lorenzo Valla *The Profession of the Religious and the Principal Arguments from the Falsely-believed and Forged Donation of Constantine / Lorenzo Valla* trans Olga Zorzi Pugliese (Toronto c 1985); see also Rummel *Monachatus* 41–55.

1054 James 1:26–7

1055 St Augustine too is considered as having written a rule, which has been taken up and adapted by many groups of 'religious,' including the Dominicans. See George Lawless *Augustine of Hippo and his Monastic Rule* (Oxford 1987). See 'Augustine of Hippo, Rule of St' ODCC 131: 'Erasmus suggested that the Rule was first written for women and adapted for men.' See 748.

that the more it approaches perfection, the more it humbles itself;[1056] and so let a pious monk, when others call him religious as a mark of distinction, say, 'I wish I were what I am called; but alas, how far I am from the worthiness of that title.' Someone who calls an equal or an inferior 'master' is being polite, but if someone else seriously proclaimed himself master, would he not encounter general mockery? Accordingly, it would be more useful for correcting everyone's character if the preacher should teach that what Scripture instructs about spiritual death, about denying the world, about mortifying earthly desires, about the observance of religion, applies to all Christians.

Associated with these is that much used word 'obedience,' which some twist to strengthen human authority, not to say tyranny, though the paramount and true obedience is to believe the divine Scriptures, to obey their commands, and in everything to submit all human desires and emotions to the divine will; this relates not only to the commands about believing and living but also to enduring the afflictions that this life brings with it, being prey to varied tribulations. Thus Paul, writing to the Romans, calls it the 'obedience of faith';[1057] similarly, he writes to the Corinthians that all holy men glorify God because of the Corinthians' obedience to their confession of the gospel of Christ,[1058] likewise Peter, 'Into obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.'[1059] Of Christ it has been written that to his Father he was 'obedient even to death.'[1060] From this the obedience of the martyrs shone forth; everyone who bears with equanimity the calamities sent by God, imposed because of a striving for justice or encountered in accordance with the condition of this life, approximates their example. Here someone might say, 'So what? Does man not owe obedience to man?' Yes indeed, but after God; otherwise Paul would never mention disobedience to one's parents among hideous crimes,[1061] nor would he so often warn slaves to obey their masters sincerely,[1062] wives their husbands,[1063] the populace

* * * * *

1056 Cf Matt 23:12; Luke 14:11.
1057 Rom 1:5, 16:26. See *Annotationes in Romanos* CWE 56 27.
1058 2 Cor 9:13. See *Annotationes in 2 ad Corinthios* (9:13) ASD VI-9 430 for the meaning of 'in the obedience of confession' in this passage, namely, 'obeying the Gospel in the giving of alms they [the Corinthians] truly profess the gospel from their hearts.'
1059 1 Pet 1:2
1060 Phil 2:8
1061 Rom 1:30
1062 Eph 6:5 and Col 3:22
1063 Eph 5:22; Col 3:18; Titus 2:5

their king and magistrates;[1064] and so people who exhort us to obey those who have legitimate authority over us are giving correct advice: without this there cannot be peace and tranquillity.[1065] But obedience to God must be commended both to those who are in authority and to those who are under it – to those who are in charge lest they give their people commands that conflict with the commands of God, to whom they themselves also owe obedience; to those who are subordinate so that they do not obey a man from fear or flattery or hope of gain but obey God in the man. If his commands are just and fair, let them consider that God, not the man, is making those demands; but let them still comply if they are dangerous and contrary to modesty, not because he is worthy of blind obedience, but because it has pleased God, out of his love for peace and concord, that inferiors should obey their superiors, not just those who are agreeable and modest, but also those who are difficult and exacting. Such obedience wins praise for perseverence. But if a superior's authority pushes one towards impiety or wickedness, it is a mark of a Christian's self-restraint to seek first to be excused from an evil service. If nothing is accomplished with entreaties, some way of removing himself from his authority must be sought, even flight, if a better way is not available. If even this is not permitted, let the author of the unjust commands hear the words of the Apostle, 'You be the judge yourself whether one ought to "obey men rather than God."'[1066] Some nowadays advocate obedience to human persons so strongly as to cast into the shade that highest obedience that we all owe to God. A pope so often demands obedience from princes, a bishop from his clerics and presbyters, an abbot from his monks; an oath is added so that a charge of perjury can be laid if there is not total compliance with a man's will, not to say his pleasure, for it sometimes happens that some ignorant, foolish, perhaps not even sober superior compels a monk to obey in the name of holy obedience, as if in the name of something divine. In what? Not that he should live chastely, abstain from drunkenness, shun hypocrisy. What then? That he should not learn Greek, touch the works of the orators, or something even more ridiculous than this, which I would rather leave to be understood than express.[1067] If a monk is

* * * * *

1064 Rom 13:1–7

1065 See *Enchiridion* CWE 66 50. Among preachers at the papal court after the Council of Trent the phrase 'peace and tranquillity' is used frequently, replacing the expression 'peace and concord.' See McGinness *Right Thinking* 131 n147.

1066 Cf Acts 4:19 and 5:29.

1067 Chomarat (ASD V-5 195 866–7n) conjectures that Erasmus is referring to the prohibition (perhaps issued by some monastic and ecclesiastical superiors)

enslaved to Bacchus, if he indulges his gut, if he whores, if he slanders, if he is drunk with hatred and envy, if he never touches Holy Writ, he is neither a perjurer nor disobedient; if he neglects the orders of a drunken and haughty superior, a horrible deed has been committed, holy obedience has been violated, a deed that must be punished with prison and death! The subordinate is obliged to be obedient to his superior, but no more than the superior is obliged to consider carefully what he is prescribing to his subordinates.

We also limit the word 'perfection' to a few people in this way, judging perfection by external things; and so monks who are totally forbidden the eating of meat are considered more perfect than those who have not been forbidden it totally, and the barefoot are judged more perfect than the shod. And yet the words of the Gospel, 'Be perfect, just as your Father too is perfect,'[1068] pertain to all Christians. Where, you will ask, is that perfection located? The Lord explains this immediately, saying, 'Who makes his sun rise upon the good and the bad, and rains upon the just and the unjust.'[1069] The man who has advanced to the stage of charity where he desires sincerely to assist everyone, whether worthy or unworthy, will not indeed claim the title of 'perfect,' but he has earned it nonetheless, in so far as perfection is anyone's lot in this life; nor is there any kind of life in which one may not be perfect, each according to his own way.

Some think that sexual concupiscence is being mentioned wherever they read 'flesh' in Paul,[1070] and when Paul writes to the Corinthians that he was given a goad of the flesh,[1071] they interpret this as referring to the emotion of lust, though the Apostle there calls 'a goad of the flesh' the external afflictions with which he was harassed because of the gospel; he employs the word in this sense elsewhere too, sometimes using the word 'flesh' for whatever proceeds from human nature, so that 'flesh' is now not only a coarser emotion, say lust or intoxication, but even human reason itself, or rather the whole man with all his natural strength, if the spirit of Christ is lacking. The same thing occurs in the case of the word 'concupiscence,'[1072] which they

* * * * *

against reading Scripture, which he deduces from the lines below, 'if he never touches Holy Writ.'

1068 Matt 5:48

1069 Matt 5:45

1070 See eg Rom 6:19, 7:5 and 18, 8:1 and 3–4. See especially *Enchiridion* CWE 66 51–4 ('On the three parts of man: spirit, soul, and flesh').

1071 2 Cor 12:7. For Erasmus on Paul's understanding of 2 Cor 12:7 as 'the affliction brought by my enemies', see *Annotationes in 2 ad Corinthios* ASD VI-8 462. See also *Enchiridion* CWE 66 49.

1072 For 'concupiscence,' see eg Rom 7:7–8; Col 3:5; Gal 5:24.

generally interpret of the sexual appetite though the word's application is much broader.

There remains the accursed word 'apostate.' To those who do not know Greek, this is worse than Latin 'deserter' or 'renegade,' and 'apostasy' sounds worse than 'defection'; but in Greek even a wife who has divorced her husband is said to ἀποστῆναι [apostatize], and the bill of divorcement is called an ἀποστάσιον [apostasy]. Likewise a soldier is called an ἀποστάτης [apostate] when he defects from his commander to the enemy, and a people that revolts against its prince is said to ἀποστῆναι [apostatize]; finally, a pupil who departs from his teacher's doctrines is called an ἀποστάτης [apostate], for instance, if someone should defect from the Stoics to the Peripatetics or if someone went from being a nominalist to being a realist. Hence ancient Christians used the infamous word 'apostate' for those who had defected from their faith in the gospel to their former paganism or to Judaism, on the grounds that they had transferred allegiance from their commander Christ, to whom they had once pledged allegiance, to Satan, whom they had abjured. Moreover, the first of all the apostates was Lucifer, because he was the first to defect from God his creator and enticed the first parents of the human race to neglect God's commands and obey the serpent instead. It is with excellent cause, therefore, that Christians' ears shudder at the name of apostate, for nothing is more execrable than if someone once initiated in Christ should defect to Belial.[1073] But today many twist this hostile expression against those who desert the way of life of Benedict or Francis or, if they do not desert, at least make some deviation in that holy way of life. I would not want to be an advocate for those who in their maturity, under no compulsion of fear, enticed by no wiles, of their own free will, and with a sure mental resolve, have taken their vows to some religious community and then later abandon the way of life from love of this world, for these people deserve to be branded with the mark of fickleness and inconstancy. But I think that what calls for criticism is the fact that, although it is far more serious to change the profession you made to Christ in baptism with both angels and men as witnesses, to relapse to Satan and the world you have abjured, than to depart from a way of life invented by men, nevertheless a monk, even if he is an inebriate, a whoremonger, a criminal, a slanderer, a faker, or a grasper, is not called an apostate so long as

* * * * *

1073 'Belial' is another epithet for Satan or a demon; see 2 Cor 6:15: 'And what concord hath Christ with Belial?' See *Annotationes in 2 ad Corinthios* ASD VI-8 394–5, where Erasmus follows Reuchlin and Agricola in understanding Belial in complete contrast to Christ.

he does not change his garb. An angry Benedict makes dire threats against whoever fails to abide by his instructions,[1074] and they think that those who offend their commander by fighting wholeheartedly for the world and for Satan have nothing to fear from an angry Christ. But someone who wants to handle Scripture truthfully will teach that the infamy of this appellation applies to all those who have at one time professed the rule of the gospel and have received the white robe from the hands of the church as a symbol of innocence but nevertheless serve the world and Satan wholeheartedly, sometimes not even refraining from blasphemous and impious words. Accordingly, if all Christians were convinced that such men, though lay people, are more truly apostates and more infamous and more detestable than a renegade monk whom they curse and treat with horror, there would not be such general hilarity among ordinary people when they act badly and exult in extreme wickedness. There are so many who want to attribute their legal and illegal accumulation of wealth to their practical good sense, who boast of the numbers of virgins they have debauched, of other men's wives that they have violated, who want their ferocity towards their neighbours and their savagery in avenging injuries to appear brave and heroic, relying on the fact that they are laity; and though they have cast off together with Christ's whole rule the white robe that they had received in the profession of baptism, and though they have removed themselves from the fellowship of the entire church, nevertheless they applaud themselves and curse the apostate who has changed the colour of his robe or has withdrawn from a human association, not a wicked one perhaps, but a human one in any case.

Through a comparable error those who have professed monasticism are called 'dedicated to God.' I am not criticizing this; what does deserve criticism is the fact that they claim this title as though it were their own and peculiar to them, as if other Christians were not dedicated to God. All people who have once professed the grace of the gospel are marked by the same blood of Christ, all are sacred to Christ; and so those who apply the scriptural passage 'Do not touch my anointed ones'[1075] only to priests and monks would be more correct if they applied it to all Christians. What effrontery it is to consider people profane whose hearts have been consecrated as temples for the Holy Spirit![1076] If it is wicked to pollute or to violate a

* * * * *

1074 See eg *Regula Benedicti* chapters 30, 45, 46, 51.
1075 Ps 105:15 (Vulg 104:15)
1076 Cf 1 Cor 3:16, 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21–2.

church anointed by some episcopal person,[1077] how much more criminal it is to violate the temple that God has dedicated to himself through the heavenly unction of his Spirit, which he has sealed, not with vermilion, but with the precious blood of his only begotten one. If we do not narrow the broad relevance of Scripture to make it apply to a few persons but apply it to all to whom it pertains, its usefulness will be by no means limited. First those who flaunt titles of this sort will lose their haughtiness, then we will shake the indifference out of those who convince themselves that what Scripture teaches about the perfection of the evangelical life and about the sincerity of religion does not pertain to them because they are called laity and belong to the world. It is considered an unspeakable outrage if someone violates a nun sexually, and this is considered the more execrable if the perpetrator of the sexual offence[1078] is a monk, and of course there is no error in this; but since all those who have professed Christ are dedicated to God, anyone who regards all illicit intercourse as unchastity on the grounds that both bodies are dedicated to Christ is thinking correctly. Now, ordinary people think it a trivial and almost negligible offence whenever a man not bound by vows has sex with a woman bound by no vows, whereas no Christian is free to sin; but because he has professed his devotion to Christ, he sins against his very strict profession whenever he commits an unlawful act. It is the same error when ordinary people consider it a crime beyond atonement if someone steals something from priests or monks – and of course they are not mistaken here – but they are mistaken in deeming it a trivial offence when their lay neighbours are robbed; it is sacrilege whenever a Christian cheats a Christian, for whatever someone consecrated to God possesses is 'sacred.' What is given to monasteries is said to be given to God, and this is true, so long as it is given out of regard for godliness; but people are wrong if they think that what is given to children, wives, and needy relatives is not given to God. In fact people who cheat their children and servants to bestow their resources on colleges and monasteries commit a hideous sin abhorrent to

* * * * *

1077 Chomarat understands 'some episcopal person' (*ab homine suffraganeo*) as a derogatory term to designate the bishop who has consecrated a church and who has been chosen by a chapter, not by God (ASD V-5 199 950n). Current usage of 'suffragan' differs from what Erasmus intends. His phrase means literally 'a suffraganal person' and seems to be intentionally insulting, or at least dismissive. (A. Dalzell)

1078 The term 'sexual offence' (*incesti*) is also employed in canon law for sexual intercourse between two religious who have taken vows. See CWE 67 58 n154 and book 2 627 n836.

Paul as well,[1079] and in the gospel the Lord censures those who cheat their parents and enrich the *corban*.[1080]

But in order to apply Scripture appositely and to the point, a preacher does not consider it enough to pluck snippets from collections or indices but must go to the sources themselves and search out the genuine meaning of Scripture from what precedes and what follows.[1081]

Moreover, interpreters[1082] should be read with discrimination and judgment. In general, however, the Greeks surpass the Latins in the genuine treatment of Scripture, and the ancients the more recent ones; for the gospel passed to the Greeks earlier than to the Latins, and the nation itself has always excelled in fertile intellects. There are two antiquities, one ancient and either contemporary with or close to the time of the apostles (a group to which Clement, Papias, Ignatius, Justin, Irenaeus, Origen, and Tertullian belong),[1083] the other intermediate and produced Athanasius, Basil, Chrysostom, and Cyril, among the Latins Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine,[1084] when the church was now sufficiently exercised in the Scriptures, thanks to the mocking attacks of heretics, and was strengthened in the dogmas of the faith.

The ancients, therefore, are indeed to be read with reverence, though not without discrimination, but with greater forbearance than the more recent ones, since in those times the church had not yet pronounced explicitly on many topics; and it was not impious to hold doubts so long as it was done in such a spirit that the mistake or doubt would be put aside once the

* * * * *

1079 See 1 Tim 5:8: 'If any one does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his own family, he has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.'

1080 For *corban*, see Mark 7:11–13; Matt 27:6; and *Paraphrasis in Marcum* CWE 49 90–1.

1081 Erasmus resumes here his plan of providing the preacher with hermeneutical methods to investigate 'the genuine meaning of Scripture'; here he lays down the principle of studying the meaning in the context of the passage.

1082 'Interpreters' (*interpretes*): ie commentators on Scripture. Erasmus expresses his predilection for the Greek Fathers' commentaries and for the ancient commentators in general, as opposed to the more popular modern commentators such as Nicholas of Lyra (1270–1340), Thomas Aquinas (1225–74), and others.

1083 Pope Clement I or Clement of Rome (fl c 96), Papias (c 60–130), Ignatius of Antioch (c 35–107), Justin Martyr (c 100–65), Irenaeus (c 130–200), Origen (c 185–c 254), and Tertullian (c 160–c 225).

1084 Athanasius (c 296–373), Basil the Great (c 330–79), Chrysostom (c 347–407), and Cyril of Alexandria (d 444), Ambrose (c 339–97), Jerome (c 345–420), and Augustine (354–430). Except for the works of Cyril of Alexandria, Erasmus had published editions of all their works.

truth was revealed. At the same time it should be noted that some books have been issued under the name of very old writers, which they did not write, something that has also happened to the most famous writers of middle antiquity, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, to say nothing of the Greeks. In this group Augustine is assigned first place on the grounds that he has given considerable assistance to the schools of theology with his definitions.

Therefore those who advise that these men are to be read reverently and that their assertions are not to be rejected rashly are giving correct advice; but those who have laid down the law that their interpretations in ambiguous or obscure passages of Scripture are to be regarded as an article of faith, so that it is not permissible now to consider whether a truer and more genuine meaning of Scripture can be found, lay down for us a law that is both harsh and far from just, since the Doctors themselves do not demand this authority for themselves but defer to canonical Scripture alone. And those very men who lay down this law disagree with the opinions of the Doctors whenever the case demands it. In addition, those very men whose authority they claim we should treat as inviolable often disagree among themselves, sometimes even with themselves. Finally, it is acknowledged that they are frequently at a loss in expounding Scripture and frequently do not grasp the true meaning of Scripture but interpret many things wrongly, not to mention the fact that, because they are often either speaking or writing for the people, they have made considerable allowance for the feelings of the uninformed mob, for whom the finer subtleties are not always appropriate. But, they say, they are to be heeded as oracles – in those matters in which they agree. I admit that the agreement of many famous men is a powerful force for credibility if it is constant; but what are you to do if two or three agree and just as many disagree? The agreement of the whole church makes us believe that Christ's mother was never known by a man, even though this is not stated in Scripture, because no orthodox person has ever entertained doubts about it. But when Jerome and Augustine agree, and Origen and Ambrose disagree in expounding a passage of Scripture, I do not think it a crime to follow what seems to be more correct, so long as it is done with Christian moderation and without dogmatism. The authority of Scripture is not shaken if one man or another fails to grasp some passage, and the authority of the Doctors is not completely destroyed if they are read with judgment and reverence, for even when their writings are unclear or mistaken, they offer us an opportunity to discover something more precise. So great, moreover, and so inexhaustible is the richness of Scripture that is hidden in mysteries that there never has been and never will be a lack of material for the devout application of scholars to pore over and dig out, provided always that the dogmas of the Catholic faith remain unshaken.

And it is not disgraceful for a doctor, however great, to be unsure in certain passages of Scripture, in others to confess honestly, 'I do not understand,' especially since some things are contained there that the Holy Spirit did not want to be understood fully, such as what the Lord prophesies in the Gospel about the end of the world,[1085] and likewise what Paul writes to the Thessalonians, 'Only now let the one who holds, hold fast until he is out of the way';[1086] Augustine candidly admits that he does not understand this passage.[1087]

Furthermore, we must strive with all our power in citing the witness of the Scriptures not to twist anything otherwise than according to the genuine meaning of Scripture, especially whenever we are fighting on behalf of the dogmas of the faith against heretics; for we see that the ancients gave themselves some leeway in this regard and that more recent writers, though they are very well-trained in the scholastic wrestling grounds, show themselves rather less felicitous in adducing the witness of Scripture. I suspect that the reason is that some people waste their lives over certain difficulties that offer more scope for display and so grow every day more appealing to the clever; as a result the proper order of things gets turned around, and it sometimes happens that Aristotle or human arguments are cited in earnest, the witness of Scripture more from convention than with sincerity. Some common texts have almost the status of proverbs; these are frequently applied inappropriately by the careless.

Such is 'The kingdom of heaven is suffering violence, and violent men are seizing it.'[1088] They generally twist this to refer to vigils, fasts, and other afflictions of the body, and this is indeed a pious statement encouraging us to attack those desires of ours that rebel against the spirit and, with St Paul, to punish our body and reduce it to slavery;[1089] but that is not the genuine meaning of the passage.[1090] Similarly, they twist what Paul writes to the Romans, 'Your reasonable worship,'[1091] as though the Apostle were advising that the torturing of the body should be moderated; certainly this interpretation conveys an orthodox sentiment but one far removed from Paul's

* * * * *

1085 Cf Matt 24:3–14; Mark 13:3–13; Luke 21:7–36.
1086 2 Thess 2:7
1087 Augustine *De civitate Dei* 20.19: 'I frankly confess I do not know what he means. I will nevertheless mention such conjectures as I have heard or read.'
1088 Matt 11:12. See *Annotationes in Matthaeum* ASD VI-5 198–200.
1089 1 Cor 9:27
1090 For Erasmus' interpretation of 'the genuine meaning' as a metaphor ('Paul is very fond of using comparisons'), see ASD VI-8 210.
1091 Rom 12:1

intention.[1092] Again, some even among the ancients interpreted the passage at Deuteronomy 28, 'And your life will be as though hanging before you, and you will not believe your life,'[1093] as referring to the crucifixion of Christ, whom the Jews saw hanging and did not believe; through him they could have secured eternal life had they believed. But the sequence of the words itself shows that the passage has a different meaning, namely that God is threatening his people that, if they violate his commands, they will be scattered to unknown nations to live among them in the utmost terror, always fearing that they would be killed even if no one is planning to kill them; Moses calls this a 'hanging' life, which they should mistrust. The passage goes as follows: 'Your life will be as though hanging before you. You will be afraid day and night, and you will not believe your life.' What is in the middle explains both what precedes and what follows; 'believe' has been put for 'trust.' Someone will admit that this is the genuine meaning but that it is understood of Christ through an allegory. The allegory is faulty, and the correct meaning conflicts with it, for if you take it of Christ, the addition of 'as though' is pointless; and it was not in other lands but in Judaea that the Jews saw Christ hanging on the cross and did not believe him.

More recent writers take what is found in Genesis, 'Because of this, a man will leave his father and mother and will cling to his wife,'[1094] and twist it to mean that these words prohibit marriage between parents and children. If they are correct, it was quite inappropriate for Christ to cite this evidence in the gospel,[1095] adducing it to show that the bond of matrimony is absolutely indissoluble. Likewise with what is in Deuteronomy and in Revelation, 'You will add nothing to the word which I speak to you, nor will you take away from it';[1096] some twist this to mean that it is wrong to consult Hebrew sources or Greek translations in an edition of the Old Testament, or in the New to seek from Greek manuscripts either a more authentic reading or a more genuine meaning when a passage of Scripture means something quite different. In fact it is the person who uses the comparison of passages and the assistance of languages to seek out the genuine meaning who is

* * * * *

1092 See *Annotationes in Romanos* CWE 56 321–3. Apparently some preachers explained the passage to mean 'we should not punish ourselves too severely for our shortcomings.' Erasmus explains the meaning to be 'we should not offer dumb animal sacrifices as the Jews do, but offer our rational selves.' (A. Dalzell)

1093 Deut 28:66

1094 Gen 2:24

1095 Matt 19:5 (cf 19:1–12) and Mark 10:7 (cf Mark 10:2–12)

1096 Deut 4:2 and Rev 22:19

truly fulfilling Moses' command, while the person who misinterprets out of a faulty understanding of Scripture is taking away not just the words, but, what is more important, the very meaning of Scripture and adding what Scripture does not acknowledge. For this purpose, skill in languages and the differing translations of different men will have the greatest importance, provided judgment and sound discrimination is present.

Now, as I began to say, the ancient Doctors sometimes give themselves some leeway to twist the words of Scripture to suit their argument, especially when they are fighting against heretics or exhorting to perfection. Examples are more readily available than we should like; nevertheless, I shall produce some, in part to clarify what I am saying, in part so that we may with greater caution avoid this licence.

In the homilies that he wrote on Luke, Origen interprets the words in the Song of the Virgin, 'Because he regarded the lowliness of his maidservant,'[1097] as though Mary were praising her own modesty as entitling her to become the Mother of God, and later writers generally follow this fabrication even though it is immodest to speak of one's own modesty. In fact the most holy Virgin is professing her own unworthiness in these words, just as St Paul professes that he is the least of the apostles and even unworthy of the name apostle,[1098] for this humility does not proclaim her virtue but her low estate and, so to speak, her worthlessness. The truth of this will be quite plain to anyone who examines more carefully the tenor of the whole Song.[1099] Because we have given quite careful advice on this subject elsewhere,[1100] we will not burden the reader here with more words. Those who say that the Virgin pleased God especially through her outstanding modesty are not lying, but that modesty is better expressed if we understand that she is professing her own unworthiness.

* * * * *

1097 Luke 1:48. See Origen *Homily 8. Luke 1.46–51* in *Homilies on Luke, Fragments on Luke* FOC 94 37–6; PG 13 1821. See *Annotationes in Lucam* ASD VI-5 464 (*Humilitatem ancillae*).

1098 1 Cor 15:9: 'For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.'

1099 Luke 1:46–55

1100 For Erasmus' extended comments on the Magnificat, see *Paraphrasis in Lucam* LB VII 292–4; but see also *Colloquia* (*Merdardus*) CWE 39 938–63, for the Observant Franciscan's ('Preacher of the Magnificat,' 'Magnificatician') exposition of the Song of the Virgin Mary at Augsburg before King Ferdinand, Emperor Charles V, and other monarchs and learned persons. See also CWE 39 958 nn58–9.

We do indeed err less when we depart from the genuine meaning of Scripture and adduce something that is equally pious and is contained in other passages of Scripture; but the best thing is, if possible, never to deviate from the true understanding of Scripture.

Thus, when different interpretations of the same passage are in circulation, you should take the one that you judge is genuine, not the one that most assists the point at issue, as St Jerome does when extolling virginity in *Contra Iovinianum*,[1101] laying hold of μεμέρισται ἡ γυνὴ καὶ παρθένος [literally 'woman and maiden has been separated'][1102] as though the dignity of virgins were so great that it should not be counted under the heading of women; but elsewhere he admits that this meaning does not fit the apostolic truth.[1103] I could produce countless examples of this sort, but we are giving advice, not a rebuke; so these remarks seem sufficient for our didactic purpose.

The same honesty must be shown in explaining allegories, where some ancients indulged themselves to excess, especially Origen, who in the opinion of many departs too freely from the letter though it is the basis and foundation of the allegory. Ambrose and Hilary often come close to Origen's example, sometimes Jerome as well, although it is he who wrote on Malachi 1 that 'where a very obvious prophecy about the future is being woven' one must not diminish what has been written 'through the uncertainties

* * * * *

1101 Jerome *Contra Iovinanum* (*Against Jovinianum*) NPNF 2nd series 6 346–416. See also *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* (7:33–4) ASD VI-8 138–40.

1102 1 Cor 7:33–4. The Greek text is problematic and its meaning ambiguous depending on how one deals with the phrase μεμέρισται ἡ γυνὴ καὶ παρθένος and its variants. Nestle-Aland's text today assembles the phrase: ὁ δε γαμήσας μεριμνᾷ τὰ τοῦ κόσμου, πῶς ἀρέσῃ τῇ γυναικί, καὶ μεμέρισται. καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἡ ἄγαμος καὶ ἡ παρθένος μεριμνᾷ τὰ τοῦ κυρίου. The Vulgate gives the following: 'qui autem cum uxore est sollicitus est quae sunt mundi quomodo placeat uxori et divisus est et mulier innupta et virgo cogitat quae Domini sunt.' See Erasmus *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* ASD VI-8 138–40; and especially *Paraphrasis in 1 ad Corinthios* CWE 43 106, where his rendering gives that of the Greek (above): 'On the other hand, the virgin or the woman who is otherwise single has only one concern, and that is to please Christ her betrothed'; see especially 105 n62. Erasmus upbraids Jerome for the liberty he can take with texts that involve virginity and widowhood. For Jerome's treatment of this text in *Adversus Iovinianum* 1.13, see PL 23 (1845) 230C–231A; see 925 and nn1158–9 below for Erasmus' comments on Jerome Ep 123 to Ageruchia.

1103 See Jerome Ep 22.21–2 (to Eustochium) NPNF 2nd series 6 31. See also *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* (7:33–4) ASD VI-8 138–40.

of an allegory.'[1104] To a certain extent, Origen is excused by reason of his times.

There was once a great dispute between Jews and gentiles in which the Jews were offended because people were being admitted to the grace of the gospel without being circumcised and professing the law of Moses.[1105] The gentiles, on the other hand, because of their hatred of that superstitious and haughty nation, shunned their Law, so that there were even some who maintained that the Old Testament should be rejected completely and was not promulgated by the same God as the New;[1106] they were of course offended in part by a certain type of story that hardly seemed to conform to the truth or hardly to correspond to the majesty of divine Scripture (such as pretty much the whole story of the creation,[1107] likewise the substitution of Leah for Rachel at night by the groom's side, and one night's intercourse purchased by her sister with mandrake,[1108] the loves and revenge of Sampson,[1109] the harshness of the penalties contained in Deuteronomy 27), in part because of the great number of prescriptions concerning leprosy, sacrifices, choice of food, clothing, etc, which seem at first glance to tend more towards superstition than towards true piety, in part because of the savagery in taking revenge if any of these were passed over and the harshness of certain teachings, which display a lack of humanity, such as what we read about the Flood and Noah's ark,[1110] about the many thousands slaughtered for setting up the calf of gold,[1111] and of the many thousands that were destroyed, some swallowed up in a fissure of the earth[1112] and some scorched by fire sent from heaven on account of the rebellion against Aaron and Moses, about Acha being stoned and his whole family together with their possessions being consumed by fire on account of a scarlet robe and some gold and silver stolen secretly from the booty of the enemy,[1113] about the fact that they are commanded to destroy so many nations by killing and to shun them with

* * * * *

1104 Jerome *Commentarii in prophetas minores, In Malachiam* 1:10 CCSL 76A 991: 335–7.
1105 See Acts 15:1–33.
1106 This heresy began with Marcion of Sinope (d c 160); see 'Marcion' ODCC 1033–4. See 492 n120 and 530 n343 above.
1107 Gen 1:1–10
1108 Gen 29:23–4, 30:15–16
1109 Judg 16:1–31
1110 Genesis 6–9
1111 Exodus 32
1112 Num 16:31–5
1113 Joshua 7

everlasting hatred,[1114] about Uzzah being stricken with sudden death because he stretched out his hand and propped up the ark as it slipped.[1115] There are countless other things of this sort, while in the New Testament there is simple and clear truth and nothing that smacks of superstition or savagery; instead everything is full of honesty and gentleness.

Therefore, just as Paul, in order to correct the superstition of the Jews and to persuade the gentiles that the Old Law should not be rejected in the least but is holy and good if understood correctly, followed Christ in explaining the wrappings of types and opened the sources of allegories,[1116] so Origen too, a pious man and of a Pauline spirit, showed through allegories that an evangelical sense is hidden even in what seemed on the surface cruel and superstitious, in order to commend the books of the Old Testament to the Greeks. If he was immoderate in this pursuit, it should be attributed to his times. I should like it to be understood that I have said this not in order to free Origen entirely from blame, but so that he might be held worthy of forgiveness, being a man otherwise commendable for many outstanding virtues.[1117]

In those passages where an allegory has not been revealed to us on the authority of canonical Scripture, there is no charge of impiety if someone introduces a careful and uncontroversial interpretation that the writer perhaps did not imagine there, provided that what is introduced is in line with pious belief. However, we must ensure in good faith, so far as can be accomplished by human effort, that our interpretation does as little violence and causes as little distortion as possible. But this can in no way happen unless the literal or grammatical sense on which the allegory is constructed has been understood and weighed accurately, for if there has been a mistake in the foundation, whatever you construct upon it cannot fit. In fact, the more elaborate the structure, the more malformed and ridiculous it will be.

All the ancients unanimously make the mystical Song of Solomon[1118] an allegory of Christ as groom and the church as bride.[1119] More modern

* * * * *

1114 Cf Numbers 21; Deut 3:1–7 and 7; Joshua 10. For the hatred of other nations, perhaps Erasmus infers this from Deut 7:10 and in general.

1115 2 Sam 6:1–8

1116 See eg Gal 4:21–31 (allegory of 'the free woman' and Hagar); Romans 9 (the election of Israel).

1117 For Erasmus' estimation of Origen's exegetical achievement, see Godin 248–347; see also 433–48 (*La réhabilitation d'Origène par Erasme*).

1118 The Song of Solomon, also known as the Canticle of Canticles.

1119 This identification goes back to Origen; see *The Song of Songs: Commentary and Homilies* trans R. P. Lawson (Westminster, Md 1957). See also Ann W. Astell *The*

writers have wrenched this into a reference to the most holy Virgin, Jesus' mother according to the flesh,[1120] but this requires no small degree of equivocation. They admit that the Song pertains to Christ and the church but say that it is not absurd to apply it through tropology to the mother of the groom, who holds first place among the brides of Christ. But all the souls of the pious are brides of Christ. After the head, which is Christ,[1121] Paul assigns first place in the body of the church to the apostles,[1122] who were the groom's nearest associates. It was a beautiful idea to attribute first place among the groom's associates to the Virgin Mother. But even when one accepts the extraordinary dignity of the most blessed Virgin and allows that even the majesty of the apostolic order yields to it, there are nevertheless in that Song things that it would hardly be modest to attribute to the most chaste Virgin, that is, in the way they sound to human ears. In any event, I do know that there is nothing in that theme that is not mystical. I append no example of this phenomenon, because they will easily occur to anyone who has read this Song even once. In addition, there are some things there that do not fit a Virgin free from all stain of wrongdoing, such as, 'I am black but beautiful,' 'Do not look at me that I am dusky,'[1123] and 'I looked for him and did not find him, the guards of the city found me,'[1124] etc. But however much one equivocates here, it is obvious that mystical Scripture has been twisted somewhat from its genuine sense contrary to the interpretation of all the ancients. If we allow ourselves to adapt to the Virgin mother whatever words in the mystical books figure the church, the way that it is called an enclosed garden, a spring with a seal,[1125] let her also be called Noah's ark[1126] and the house in which the Passover was

* * * * *

Song of Songs in the Middle Ages (Ithaca 1990) 2 and passim; *The Song of Songs: Interpreted by Early Christian and Medieval Commentators* trans and ed Richard A. Norris Jr (Grand Rapids, Mich c 2003); E. Ann Matter *The Voice of My Beloved: the Song of Songs: in Western Christianity* (Philadelphia 1990) especially 151–77.

1120 For 'more recent writers,' see eg the sermons of Bernard of Clairvaux *On the Song of Songs* trans Kilian Walsh with introduction by M. Corneille Halfants, Cistercian Fathers Series 4, 7, 31, 40 (Spencer, Mass and Kalamazoo, Mich 1971–80). Bernard, however, does not make the identification of the bride in the Song of Songs with Mary, unlike Rupert of Deutz. See M.B. Pranger *Bernard of Clairvaux and the Shape of Monastic Thought* (Leiden 1994) 145–62.

1121 Col 1:18

1122 1 Cor 12:28

1123 Song of Sol 1:4–5

1124 Song of Sol 3:1–3

1125 Song of Sol 4:12

1126 Gen 6:14–22

consumed,[1127] the house of Rahab,[1128] the temple of Solomon,[1129] the sheep pen,[1130] the single altar,[1131] the room in which Christ celebrated the new Pasch,[1132] the city of Sion,[1133] the room in which the disciples received the Holy Spirit,[1134] and other expressions of this kind.

It is harsher when we twist into a reference to the Virgin Mother what is said in the hagiographic books[1135] about wisdom, which according to the anagogic sense is the Son of God: 'I was created from the beginning and before the ages, and I shall not cease up to the age to come,'[1136] 'The Lord created me at the beginning of his ways,'[1137] etc. I am not unaware that the device of predestination[1138] is used to twist these words to the Virgin, but they could be applied in the same way to all pious people. Similarly, St Ambrose in his funeral oration transfers to the body of the deceased Valentinian many of the things that are said about Christ in the Song of Solomon[1139] and transfers to his soul more things that are said there about his bride the church. I admit that this is done out of pious zeal, but I should have preferred that an emperor be commended without straining Scripture.

What strained allegories St Augustine uses in expounding the heading of Psalm 33,[1140] not through affectation but misled by an incorrect translation!

* * * * *

1127 2 Chron 35:11–12
1128 Josh 2:1
1129 1 Chron 22:2 and 2 Chronicles 3–6
1130 Num 32:16; Deut 28:4
1131 Exod 20:24
1132 'Celebrated the new Pasch' ie the cenacle; see Matt 26:17–29; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22:7–38. Cf 2 Chron 35:11–12.
1133 Cf 2 Sam 5:7.
1134 Acts 2:1–2
1135 'Hagiographic books' refers to the eleven books of the Hebrew bible other than the Law (Pentateuch) and the prophets.
1136 Ecclus 24:14
1137 Prov 8:22. Erasmus uses the term 'created' (*creavit*) for the Vulgate *possedit* 'possessed' and LXX ἔκτισεν 'created.' RSV translates the term as 'created'; DV 'possessed.' Chomarat (ASD V-5 209 197n) observes that the Hebrew contains both senses.
1138 'The device of predestination' (*commentum praedestinationis*); Chomarat (ASD V-5 209 197n) reads the word *commentum* as 'idea' or 'invention.' For the interpretation of Mary as predestined, see Steven Botterill *Dante and the Mystical Tradition: Bernard of Clairvaux in the Commedia* (Cambridge 1994) 183–4.
1139 Ambrose *De obitu Valentiniani* (*Funeral Oration for Valentinian*) CSEL 73 327–67; FOC 22 265–99
1140 Augustine *Enarratio in psalmum 33.1, sermo 1* CCSL 38 274; *Exposition 1 of Psalm 33* in *Expositions of the Psalms* WSA III-16 13–15, especially 14; and *Enarratio in*

The heading runs, 'The Psalm of David when he changed his face before Abimelech and dismissed him and went away.'[1141] The passage, which is at 1 Kings 21,[1142] was translated thus by the Septuagint: ἠλλοίωσε τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ καὶ προσεποιήσατο ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ, καὶ ἐτυμπάνιζεν ἐπὶ ταῖς θύραις τῆς πόλεως, καὶ παρεφέρετο ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ [He changed his appearance in front of him and feigned a false character on that day and drummed on the doors of the city and made strange movements with his hands].[1143] Jerome translated it thus from the reading of the Hebrew: 'And he changed his face before Achis, and he was collapsing into their hands, and he pressed against the door of the gate.'[1144] Augustine, however, read it according to a version drawn from the Septuagint translation, thus: 'He changed his countenance before him, and he was dissembling,[1145] and was beating drums at the doors of the city, and was carried in his hands.'[1146] But because there is an error here in the source, that is, in the original meaning, see the manifold lameness of the allegory that Augustine fits to Christ.

* * * * *

psalmum 33.1 CCSL 38 282; *Exposition 2 of Psalm 33* in *Expositions of the Psalms* WSA III-16 23–5, where Augustine develops the allegory more extensively.

1141 Ps 33:1 (Vulg): Readings vary; the Stuttgart edition gives the reading according to the Hebrew: *David quando commutavit os suum coram Abimelech et eiecit eum et abiit*. The Vulgate translating the Septuagint reads: *David cum inmutavit vultum suum coram Abimelech et dimisit eum et abiit*. Given the ambiguity of the Latin in both renderings, Augustine's rendering is understandable. See Erasmus' lengthy discussion of this psalm's superscription in his exposition of Psalm 33 CWE 64 275–306. See also Robert Weber *Le psaltier romain et les autres anciens psaltiers latins* (Rome 1953) 65.

1142 Vulgate: 1 Kings 21:13 (1 Sam 21:13); LXX 1 Kings 21:14 (1 Sam 21:14)

1143 Modern editions of the Septuagint reconstruct this passage as: καὶ ἠλλοίωσεν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ καὶ προσεποιήσατο ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ καὶ ἐτυμπάνιζεν ἐπὶ ταῖς θύραις τῆς πόλεως καὶ παρεφέρετο ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ . . .

1144 Erasmus is referring to Jerome's *Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos*.

1145 'Dissembling' (*affectabat*); for Erasmus' understanding of *affectabat* here, see his *Exposition of Psalm 33* CWE 64 291.

1146 Augustine *Enarratio in Psalmum 33 sermo 1* CCSL 38 274:40–2; *Exposition 1 of Psalm 33* in *Expositions of the Psalms* WSA III-16 13–15, especially 14. Augustine employs the word *affectabat* (CCSL 38 274:41), understanding that David 'was feigning madness' (*et recessit inde David incolumis per istam figurationem furoris*); Augustine's text also reads 'and he was carried in his hands' (*et ferebatur in manibus suis*). Erasmus demonstrates how errors in source not only result in misunderstanding the historical sense of the text but vitiate the allegorical sense as well; see Augustine's allegorical interpretation at *Enarratio in Psalmum 33 sermo* 2 CCSL 38 282–3; *Exposition 2 of Psalm 33* WSA III-16 23–5. Erasmus explains the textual problems, 923 below.

First of all, he interprets the words in the heading of the Psalm, 'He dismissed him and went away,'[1147] as though David went away after dismissing King Achis, though the meaning is 'Achis dismissed David, and the latter went away, having been dismissed,' for it is ἀπέλυσεν [dismissed], and whoever allows or orders someone to go away dismisses ἀπολύει; and the allegory fits this meaning better because Christ, whom the Jewish people rejected as mad (for the cross was a scandal to the Jews),[1148] transferred the grace of the gospel to the gentiles through the apostles.[1149] Then he adapts his reading of 'He was striving' for προσεποιήσατο to the longing of Christ,[1150] who longed with a deep longing to redeem the human race by his death[1151] – more piously than appositely, for προσεποιήσατο there is the same as ὑπεκρίνατο, that is, 'He was feigning,' in other words he was behaving other than was the case. Again, he interprets his reading 'He was carried in his hands' as referring to Christ, who at the Last Supper offered his body and blood to his apostles with his hands, saying, 'Take, eat, this is my body,'[1152] though according to Jerome's version the literal sense is quite different, namely that David was falling down among the hands of those who wanted to sieze him, as though he could hardly stand on his feet, in a way characteristic of those who are mad or drunk; for it is not ἐφέρετο [carried] but παρεφέρετο [carried away], which is to be borne by force where one should not. Now, though we grant that the Septuagint translation 'He was carried in his hands' is true, the literal sense contains no absurdity, for while feigning insanity he pretended that he lost the use of his feet and supported himself on his hands, pressing against the gate of the city with his body. But here Augustine departs from the letter, saying, 'We do not find how it is understood literally of David himself, but we do find how it is understood of Christ, when commending his very body he says, "This is my body"; for he carried that body in his own hands.'[1153]

Less tolerable is the way that some twist Noah's ark, which according to the interpretation of the ancients contains a type of the church, into a reference to the Virgin Mother of Jesus. I myself heard someone, not a

* * * * *

1147 The Vulgate reads: *Davidi, cum immutavit vultum suum coram Achimelech, et dimisit eum, et abiit* 'Of David, when he feigned madness before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.'
1148 1 Cor 1:23
1149 Cf Rom 11:11–13.
1150 Cf Luke 22:15; see *Paraphrasis in Lucam* CWE 48 188.
1151 Cf Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; 1 John 1:7; Luke 22:15.
1152 Matt 26:26
1153 See n1146 above.

theologian but venerable in the holy garb that the dying also embrace,[1154] thoroughly wise in his own judgment, on a popular feast of the Virgin, in the principal church, in a very crowded assembly, for a whole hour doing (or concentrating on) nothing but fitting the whole structure of the ark as reported in Genesis[1155] to the Virgin through an allegory, and with such pride and impudence and such gestures that you could easily recognize that the man imagined that he was explaining something wonderful and splendid. It is remarkable indeed how much sweat he expended to persuade us that smoothed timbers smeared inside and out with pitch fit the Virgin, along with a length of three hundred cubits, a width of fifty, a height of thirty, a roof of one cubit, a window added at the top, a door added at the bottom, dining rooms and three storeys, and other things that there is no need to fit individually even to the church, though St Peter gave the ancients a sort of handle[1156] for interpreting the ark as the church, saying, 'In the days of Noah, when the ark was made in which a few, namely eight, souls were saved through the water, just as a baptism in a similar form brings about our salvation now.'[1157] In baptism the old man is immersed; in the ark, which is the church, the chosen are saved. Yet it is not necessary to force every part of the story into the allegory. How indeed will it fit the Virgin that eight people, together with every kind of animal except fish, entered the ark? Moreover, what profit did the congregation reap from that sermon? No profit: a good deal of annoyance. Indeed I wondered at the patience of the Christian congregation, which that man abused quite shamelessly.

In fact even St Jerome rather indulges himself in this regard, especially when he is battling against an adversary with every kind of weapon, or

* * * * *

1154 Erasmus refers to the pious custom of certain individuals, some belonging to the Third Order of St Francis and others 'of intention,' who had the privilege of being buried in the habit of the Franciscans. It was piously held that this would benefit the soul after death, presumably because it would be taken under the patronage of St Francis; or, as Erasmus' character Theotimus puts it: 'A man who makes a profession is instantly enriched by the surpassing merits of the whole order; he is assuredly grafted to the body of a most holy company' (1004:37); see *Exequiae seraphicae* in *Colloquia* CWE 40 996–1032. The work was printed first in 1531 on the occasion of the death of Alberto Pio (c 1475–1531), hereditary prince of Carpi, and one of Erasmus' most insufferable antagonists. The individual giving the sermon here was doubtless a Franciscan priest.

1155 Gen 6:14–16

1156 For 'handle,' see *Adagia* I iv 4 *Ansam quaerere, et consimiles metaphorae* 'To look for a handle, and similar metaphors.'

1157 1 Pet 3:20–1

whenever he is going full sail in praise of virginity or of widowhood, which is akin to it. I shall produce a passage or two as an example.

Writing to Gerontia to oppose the remarriage of a widow, he cites the words of Jeremiah: 'You have made for yourself the face of a whore and brought shame upon yourself.'[1158] But that prophet is not discussing second marriage or polygamy there: he is comparing the Israelite people, which had neglected God and turned to the worship of idols and every impiety, to a woman who has left her lawful husband and prostituted herself to many lovers. What effrontery does it take then to twist such a cruel insult against a Christian woman who is engaged in lawful conduct, persevering in holy religion?[1159] Meanwhile, it is not always the case that a woman who is marrying again is marrying because of lust: it is possible that she wants children, possible that she is looking for someone to govern her household or someone to sustain her in her poverty. But grant that her objective is a remedy for her incontinence; obdurate impiety is one thing, the weakness of human flesh quite another. Finally, a venial fault does not sunder us from God's friendship – otherwise no one would enjoy God's good will.

Here he also adapts what is in Genesis 6, putting second marriage among the unclean animals, or rather among the snakes.[1160] I am not examining here the difference between men and animals, or between clean and unclean,[1161] between quadrupeds, birds, and reptiles; to me the unclean, including reptiles as well, seem to indicate those who have indeed received the water of baptism but live corruptly. But they are kept, however, in the church, in its broader definition, in hope of their repentance, so that this type agrees with the gospel parable in which a seine packed with good and bad fish is dragged to shore.[1162] And so it is harsh to call a woman a snake if she has remarried relying upon the Apostle's advice, 'I want younger widows to marry';[1163] but if everyone imperfect is a snake, even virgins will be snakes and indeed all Christians alike.

* * * * *

1158 Jerome Ep 123.8 *Ad Geruchiam* (to Geruchia) CSEL 56 81; NPNF 2nd series 6 233. Erasmus refers to the woman as Gerontia, but Jerome's letter is addressed to Ageruchia (*Ad Geruchiam*). Jerome renders the Vulgate reading of Jer 3:3 (*frons mulieris meretricis facta est tibi noluisti erubescere*) as *facies meretricis facta est tibi; inpudorata es tu*.

1159 Jerome is ardently (shamelessly) urging the widow Ageruchia not to remarry. Though he professes that he does not condemn second marriages, he states: 'I urge those who have been once married to lives of continence.'

1160 Jerome Ep 123.9 NPNF 2nd series 6 233

1161 Cf Gen 7:2.

1162 Matt 13:48

1163 1 Tim 5:14

He adduces a passage of Paul to Timothy for the same purpose.[1164] Some interpret the large house as this world, but let us grant that by 'the large house' the church is understood. In this the golden vessels are those endowed with outstanding piety, the silver ones those who are also virtuous but of inferior grade, and these too have been assigned to honourable uses. The wooden and clay vessels that are said to have been designed for undignified uses are the heretics, schismatics, and those who live wickedly, whom the church nevertheless tolerates in hope of their repentance, as is shown by the words of the Apostle that are appended, 'Therefore if a man cleanses himself from these, he will be a vessel for honour.'[1165] And just as clay jars and chamber pots are sordid vessels but are necessary for the use of the whole household, so the wickedness of heretics and the savagery of persecutors have occasionally brought much usefulness to the church of Christ, as the former train the pious to learning, the latter to patience and clemency. How is it right, then, to compare a woman who marries twice to a chamber pot? The fact that Paul is discussing heretics there is shown by what precedes, 'Among whom are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have strayed from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened, and have subverted the faith of some.'[1166] The gravest Doctors of the church also interpret the Apostle's words in this sense.

To this he joins a gospel parable,[1167] saying, 'For since, in the sowing of the good earth, the gospels teach a hundredfold and a sixtyfold and a thirtyfold crop, and the hundredfold, as the crown of virginity, has first place, the sixtyfold, as the suffering of widows, is counted second, the thirtyfold witnesses the bonds of matrimony by the actual joining of fingers,[1168] where will second marriage be counted? In fact it lies beyond calculation. Certainly

* * * * *

1164 2 Tim 2:20: 'In a large house there are utensils not only of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for special use, some for ordinary' (Jerome Ep 123.9 NPNF 2nd series 6 233).

1165 2 Tim 2:21; see *Paraphrasis in 2 ad Timotheum* CWE 44 47–8.

1166 2 Tim 2:17–18

1167 Erasmus is still discussing Jerome's Ep 123.9 NPNF 2nd series 6 233. The parable is Matt 13:3–9; cf Jerome Ep 48.2 (to Pammachius) NPNF 2nd series 6 66–7.

1168 Jerome in Ep 123.8 (to Ageruchia) CSEL 56 82 explains that the tips of the thumb and forefinger are joined together as a symbol of the marriage tie, thus creating the image of a circle. The remaining fingers create the number thirty: as the thumb and forefinger form a zero, the remaining three fingers display the number three. The thirty, of course, would correspond to the sower who brought forth thirtyfold. Jerome's ingenuity leads him to interpret the allegorical meaning of the parable as there being no place for second marriages.

it does not arise in good earth but in the thickets and thorn bushes of foxes, which are compared to the most wicked Herod, so that she thinks that she deserves praise if she is better than whores, if she surpasses the victims of public lusts, if she has been prostituted to one man, not several.' Thus Jerome is almost carried away by his zeal for chastity as though by some sea surge and crashes against the same rocks as Tertullian.[1169] But the interpreters do not allegorize this parable in the same way, inasmuch as Origen assigns the first place to martyrs, the next to virgins, the third to spouses.[1170] But if the bonds of marriage occupy third place, how is a woman who is in a bond of matrimony outside the reckoning? Now, if we should want to accommodate the parable to the order that Paul indicates,[1171] assigning first place to apostles, second to prophets, third to teachers, fourth to miraculous powers, fifth to the grace of healings, sixth to assistances, seventh to governings, eighth to kinds of tongues, ninth to the interpretations of words, where will those who have been married once be? Of no account? Or somewhere in fourth to ninth place, since the gospel parable has only three ranks of good earth?[1172] But if second marriage is of no account and does not arise in good earth, Tertullian has been condemned without reason for wanting to banish second marriage from the church, and Paul is counselling something impious in wanting younger widows to marry and become mothers and produce children. In addition, if they are bad earth and all those who are harried by worldly cares are compared to foxes along with the most wicked Herod, even the first bonds of marriage, which Jerome called the good earth, will be reckoned under the same heading, for the Apostle speaks about both as follows: 'You have been bound to a wife, do not seek release; you have been released from a wife, do not seek a wife; but if you have taken a wife, you have not done wrong, and a maiden does not do wrong if she has married. But such will have tribulation of the flesh.'[1173] He calls 'tribulation of the flesh' the external cares that matrimony brings with it, such as necessary

* * * * *

1169 Erasmus is likely referring to Tertullian's *De exhortatione castitatis* (*On Exhortation to Chastity*) CSEL 70 125–52; NPNF 1st series 4 50–8; commenting on Paul's advice on this question, Tertullian notes, 'If we look deeply into his meanings, and interpret them, second marriage will have to be termed no other than a species of fornication' 55.

1170 See Origen *Origenes sec. translationem Rufini – in Numeros homilia 11.3* CSEL 30 82; Origen *Homilies on Numbers* trans Thomas P. Schech, ed Christopher A. Hall, Ancient Christian Texts (Downers Grove, Ill 2009) 54.

1171 1 Cor 12:28

1172 See Matt 13:3–8.

1173 1 Cor 7:27–8

dealings with kin, obedience owed the husband, fidelity owed the wife, and the trouble of raising, educating, and placing children.[1174] But these cares are not so terrible that it is wrong not to undertake them so long as they are performed without calling one away from piety, for then they do begin to be thorns that choke the word so that it does not bear fruit. All the same, even a widow is compelled to devote some part of herself to cares of this sort if she has children; but if second marriage is compared to bad earth overrun with thorns and thickets because it brings external worry, the marriage of a virgin, which Jerome thinks pertains to the thirtyfold fruit, does the same. The explanation of the allegory is simpler if by hundredfold fruit we understand the greatest piety,[1175] by sixtyfold a moderate piety, by thirtyfold the lowest. But what is lowest is not automatically bad, for wherever there is an order there must be a highest, middle, and lowest, which exist even among the angels and the apostles. Again, if what is imperfect is assigned to the bad earth, the marriage of a virgin is itself a decline from the perfection of constant chastity. In addition, if the generation and education of children relate to the barren earth because they are not accomplished without care, how is it that Paul says that a woman becomes saved through the generation and faithful education of children?[1176] For he hints at this when he adds, 'if they stay in the faith.' Thus it would be less forced if we refer the hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold crop not to the types of calling but to the purity of mind in every kind of life; there are foolish virgins who are excluded from the bedchamber of the groom,[1177] there are boorish virgins that scarcely produce a thirtyfold crop, there are wedded ones that bring a hundredfold.

He fits to the same argument the fact that Lamech is the first person ever said to have taken two wives,[1178] and he wants him to be a type of the heretics who divide the single church into several.[1179] What does this have to do with a woman who marrries another man on the death of her husband, whereas Lamech had two wives, Ada and Sella, at the same time?

* * * * *

1174 Chomarat interprets 'placing children' (*elocandorum liberorum*) as meaning finding suitable marriages for one's children. See ASD V-5 215 n336.

1175 Matt 13:8

1176 1 Tim 2:15

1177 Matt 25:1–13

1178 Gen 4:19; see also Gen 5:25–31. See also 787 above.

1179 Again Erasmus refers to Jerome Ep 123.9 NPNF 2nd series 6 234: 'And as the accursed Lamech made of the first Eve two separate wives, so also the heretics sever the second into several churches which, according to the apocalypse of John, ought rather to be called synagogues of the devil than congregations of Christ.'

Jerome calls him 'accursed.' I do not know his source for this; surely if he was execrable, it was not because he took two wives but because he was a murderer like Cain.[1180] But if someone who had two wives was accursed, what will we say about the most honoured patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, what about David who, though he had several wives, summoned back Saul's daughter Michol a second time even though he had divorced her and she had married another after the divorce?[1181] Moreover, how could Lamech be called accursed when he was observing the Lord's command, 'Grow and multiply and fill the earth,'[1182] in a lawful marriage?

Accordingly, since many props are needed to hold in place what has been twisted violently once one departs from the genuine meaning of Scripture, he tries to show that the command 'Grow and multiply' applied before the Flood and after the Flood but not after the promulgation of the gospel by adducing the words of Paul, 'The time is short,'[1183] and those of John the Baptist, 'Already the axe has been placed at the roots of the trees'[1184] to chop down with evangelical chastity the forest of the Law and of marriage; also the words of Ecclesiastes, 'A time of embracing, and a time to be far from embracings.'[1185] But Paul does not say that time is short so that people should abstain from marriage, but rather so that those who have wives should have them as though they did not have them, that is, so that they should not be so uxorious as to neglect the pursuit of piety for the sake of pleasure. But these words of Paul properly pertain not to those who have married a second time but to all marriage, or rather to all the business of human life. Why do those who are concerned about marriage not feel equal concern about those who buy and amass possessions? Do those who today profess themselves dead to the world really make purchases as though they do not possess what they have bought? Nor does the axe with which John terrifies the Jews chop down the Law and marriages but carnal desires, and John did not call people back from matrimony but invites them to penitence.[1186] Moreover, if the time of embracing pertains to the Old Law and the time of abstaining from embracing to the New, it is not only second marriage but all marriage that will be forbidden to Christians.

* * * * *

1180 See Gen 4:23.
1181 1 Sam 18:27 and 2 Sam 3:13–16
1182 Gen 1:28
1183 1 Cor 7:29
1184 Matt 3:10; Luke 3:9
1185 Eccles 3:5
1186 Matt 3:2; Luke 3:8

There are quite a few things like this in the writings of the ancients, and a huge book will be created if I proceed to mention them all. Moreover, though this way of twisting Scripture is more excusable when our aim is to encourage, discourage, or console rather than to teach or demonstrate the errors of heretics, nevertheless it is more desirable never to depart from the genuine meaning of the Scriptures. If it turns out badly, forgiveness is properly at hand for someone who strives in this direction as best he can but not for those who do it deliberately; but in the case of the ancients who otherwise handle much in the holy books in a learned and sound manner, it is sensible to ignore blemishes of this sort rather than to imitate them. Nevertheless, it is useful to point this out, not in order to castigate men who have greatly assisted Christian religion, whose memory we revere with very good reason as sacrosanct, but in order to make the preacher better equipped to handle Scripture soundly.

Now, since the course of my words has pretty much brought us here on its own, it does not seem out of place to discuss the nature of allegories. St Augustine seems to have treated the matter sufficiently in his work *De doctrina christiana* and we once touched upon the subject in the *Methodus*;[1187] however, we shall not regard it as a burden to provide instruction on this matter, sufficient for our present purpose. Metaphor is the source of many tropes, of comparison, image, and *abusio*,[1188] riddle, allegory, proverb, and fable, and any others that are akin to this kind.

Moreover, metaphor, as we touched upon above,[1189] is when one departs from the proper words for the sake of some advantage and we borrow words transferred from elsewhere by way of comparison. It can exist in a single word, such as when we say that 'a man's youth flies away' or that 'a mind glowed with anger'; only 'flies away' and 'glow' are metaphorical, the rest literal.

But if it is done of necessity because a proper word is lacking, it is *abusio* [an inexact use], which the Greeks call καταχρησις, such as when Virgil says 'happy crops' and 'the luxury of crops,'[1190] for you could hardly find

* * * * *

1187 *Methodus* = *Ratio*. See *Ratio* 259–62; 274–284. Cf LB V, VI (*Methodus* for the shorter version originally published in the *Novum instrumentum* of 1516). See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.5.9–3.29.41. Chomarat remarks that Augustine does not use the word 'allegory' (*allegoria*) but 'figure' (*figura*) and derivative expressions; see ASD V-5 219 402n.

1188 Erasmus treats *abusio* above at 876.

1189 See 871, 875, and passim above.

1190 *Georgics* 1.1 *laetas segetes* and 1.112 *luxuriem segetum*

the proper terms with which to express the poet's meaning unless you did it, somewhat awkwardly, through a periphrasis.[1191]

Moreover, a sentiment is frequently expressed by a combination of metaphorical and literal terms. But if the entire idea consists of metaphorical terms it is an allegory: for instance if someone were to say, 'Why do you keep on rubbing a wound already covered with a scar?'[1192] to a person who was renewing verbally an old grief already soothed by time. There is an allegory at Matthew 3, 'Whose winnowing shovel is in his hand,'[1193] etc.

If in addition to metaphor there is also a pleasing brevity and widespread use, we shall have a παροιμία [proverb], for example if one should say, 'You have a wolf by the ears'[1194] to somebody involved in a business that he could not maintain and could not be freed from.

It will be a riddle[1195] if there is some obscurity as well, such as, 'Sweetness came out from the mouth of the strong one'[1196] when the meaning was honey found in the lion's mouth. Similar to this is the famous remark of Diogenes, who greeted a bad flute player as a rooster because everybody used to leave his presence; a rooster rouses people from sleep, and those who rise and go away are said to be roused.[1197]

Moreover, just as a metaphor is a short simile,[1198] so a simile or comparison is a metaphor unfolded and applied to something. For example, 'Without reading, eloquence grows sterile' is a metaphor. Unfold it – 'Just as a field is exhausted by cultivation and grows sterile unless you constantly apply fertilizer, so style is rendered barren by constant writing unless it is supported by the frequent reading of authors' – and it is a similitude.

If this is applied in order to lay the appearance of something before the eyes, it will be an image, for instance, if you should say that a fierce man rushed into battle 'like a dragon, with jaws wide open, eyes blazing, crest erect.'

* * * * *

1191 'Periphrasis': 'A circuitous mode of speech'; see Quintilian 8.6.59 and *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* 4.32.43.

1192 See *Adagia* I vi 80 *Rifricare cicatricem* 'To rub up a sore.'

1193 Matt 3:12

1194 *Adagia* I v 25 *Auribus lupum teneo* 'I hold the wolf by the ears.'

1195 See Quintilian 8.6.52.

1196 Judg 14:14

1197 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* (*Diogenes*) 6.48; see also Erasmus *Apophthegmata* CWE 37 298–9. Erasmus seems to be recalling the saying from memory. His *Apophthegmata* refer to one playing the lyre (*citharoedus*); here it is to one playing a pipe, a piper (*tibicen*).

1198 See 655, 662 with n1029 above.

Rhetoricians, as we said before,[1199] define an allegory as a continuous metaphor, but in Holy Writ and among the Doctors of the church the word has a wider application, sometimes for any trope at all, on occasion also for a type, just as the Apostle at Galatians 4 uses the term allegory for what Genesis relates about Sarah and Hagar and about Isaac and Ishmael,[1200] though it is clear that there is no trope in the narrative, but the deeds themselves inherently signify a loftier meaning.

It is not unknown to me that the modern school of writers[1201] suggests a fourfold understanding of Scripture: the literal (or grammatical), the tropological, the allegorical, and the anagogical.[1202] They divide them in this way in order to credit individual teachers each with his own: Jerome with the grammatical, Gregory with the tropological, Ambrose with the allegorical, Augustine with the anagogical. This distribution is not unlike the one that has divided the individual articles of the Creed among individual apostles.[1203]

* * * * *

1199 See passim above.

1200 Gal 4:21–31; 'allegory' at 4:24.

1201 'Modern school of writers' (*neoterici*); Erasmus sometimes refers to 'modern authors' in a somewhat pejorative way, using the term *neoterici* (νεωτερικοί) and *recentiores*, which he contrasts with the ancient theologians or Doctors of the church; see eg 937 below. Cicero had used the term pejoratively *Ad Atticum* 125 (VII.2.1); here Erasmus refers to the theologians after the age of Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Aegidius Romanus, and Robert Grosseteste. In the *Ratio* 183:14–16), however, Erasmus praises Thomas Aquinas: 'in quibus est et Augustinus inter antiquos praecipuus et ipse neotericorum omnium mea sententia diligentissimus Thomas Aquinas.' For the term, its use, shifting referents, and application to the theologians both of and after the age of Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Aegidius Romanus, and Robert Grosseteste, see J. Papy 'The Reception of Agricola's *De inventione dialectica* in the teaching of logic at the Louvain faculty of arts in the early sixteenth century' in *Northern Humanism in European Context, 1469–1625: From the 'Adwert Academy' to Ubbo Emmius* ed F. Akkerman, A.J. Vanderjagt, and A.H. Van Der Laan (Leiden 1999) 167–85, especially 170–2. See also ASD V-5 220 444n.

1202 On the four senses of Scripture, see Beryl Smalley *The Bible in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, Ind 1964) 1–26 and passim; and de Lubac *Medieval Exegesis*.

1203 For this tradition, see Rufinus of Aquileia *Commentarius in Symbolum apostolorum* (*A Commentary on the Apostles Creed*) CCSL 20 125–82; ACW 20. Lorenzo Valla debunked this belief in his *Apologia ad Eugenium*, for which he was physically attacked by a preacher; see *Antidotum ad Nicolaum V*. See especially the letter of Amerbach to Erasmus (March 1530), Allen Ep 2280:5–8, with n5 on Valla and on Erasmus' interest in this question. This reference again suggests that Erasmus completed this part of book 3 after 1530. See also Erasmus' *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 241 nn28 and 252, published in 1533. Erasmus, however, does not take a stand on the question in the *Explanatio* but sees

The early Doctors,[1204] however, recognize only two interpretations, the grammatical (or literal or, if you prefer, the historical) and the spiritual, which they call by a variety of names, sometimes 'tropology,' sometimes 'allegory,' sometimes 'anagogy,' but with no distinction between them. This can be clear to scholars from various passages in the Doctors but especially from Jerome's commentary on the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, again on the fourth chapter of Isaiah, again on chapter 15 of Isaiah, on Ezekiel 16, on Amos 3,[1205] likewise Origen's eleventh *Homily* on Numbers.[1206] In fact Paul himself at Galatians 4 calls it an allegory when he says that the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the Church Triumphant, is designated by Sarah.[1207] In turn, more recent authorities have seen that there is considerable difference in these methods of interpretation and therefore have narrowed the general terms to specific kinds.

The etymologies of these words are different, but they go back to the same source. Allegory has its Greek name from the fact that one thing is

* * * * *

as its 'practical purpose, that illiterate people might with the same effort fix in their memory, as if through images arranged in order, both the names of the apostles and the individual articles of the Creed' (252). The idea that the apostles composed the Creed in this manner was represented in paintings and tapestry, some of which Erasmus perhaps saw; see eg *Second and Third Articles of the Apostles' Creed* 1500–10, Tapestry (Flemish, Brussels, Belgium), Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Mass; *The First Four Articles of the Creed*, c 1475–1500, Tapestry (Flemish, probably Brussels), Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and D.T.B. Wood '"Credo" Tapestries' *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 24/131, February 1914, 247–9, 252–4; ibidem 24/132, March 1914, 309–11, 314–17; and 'A "Credo" Tapestry: A Pictorial Interpretation of the Apostles' Creed' *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* ns 21 (1963) 240–51. When in Rome, Erasmus might have seen the recent frescoes in the Room of the Creed in the Borgia Apartments of the Vatican Palace, which under Pinturicchio's (Bernardino di Betto) direction depicted the articles of the Creed in similar fashion. My thanks to Wendy Watson for her assistance with this note.

1204 These 'early doctors' (*prisci doctores*) are St Paul, Origen, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory, etc. See *Enchiridion* CWE 66 34–5.

1205 See Jerome *In Esaiam* (4) II.iv.1-6 CCSL 73 59–62, where Isaiah chapter 4 foretells the restoration of peace and comfort to Jerusalem. In *In Esaiam* (15) V.xv.1–9, CCSL 73 175–9, the prophet foretells the desolation of the Moabites.

1206 See Origen *Origenes sec. translationem Rufini – in Numeros homilia 11.3* CSEL 30 82. See n1170 above. xref

1207 Gal 4:24–6. There is no mention of 'Church Triumphant' in this passage; the word is 'free': 'But that Jerusalem which is above is free [*libera*], which is our mother.' For the word 'triumphant,' see 934 below.

said, another understood (which is the nature of irony as well), tropology because it is a departure from plain language and we express our meaning in a new way – from τρέπω 'I turn.' Hence figures of speech are called 'tropes' because they put a new face on language, though some make distinctions among these as well, albeit with little consistency. Anagogy [raising up] takes its name from the fact that it lifts Scripture up from a humble meaning to loftier things.

There has been nothing absurd, however, in the efforts of those who have distinguished these terms for didactic purposes, so that we have tropology whenever we use Scripture to train the character of individuals; for in Greek τρόπος has three meanings: a figure of speech, a manner, and a person's life and character. This method of interpretation is nearest to the bottom, indicating in the narrative itself whatever contributes to good character. Then there is allegory when we apply Scripture to Christ and his mystical body, the Church Militant.[1208] Finally anagogy, when we are borne up from this world to the Church Triumphant and separated substances[1209] all the way to the heights of the Trinity, beyond which one cannot advance.

Let us take, for example, Abraham receiving the three men as guests; here the basis is the story told at Genesis 18. If you were to adapt this to a commendation of hospitality, many arguments are available. Abraham goes to meet men he has seen from afar, calls the unknown men 'lords, designating himself with the title of servant; falling upon the ground, he entreats them energetically to lodge with him. When he had gained his request, the hundred-year-old man hastens at the double into his tent, instructing Sarah to cook quickly some wheat loaves under the ashes. Though an old woman of ninety, she eagerly carries out his instructions; so the patriarch had taught his wife. Meanwhile, he himself runs to the herd to bring a calf, not just any one, but the tenderest and best; in other circumstances he could have entrusted this to the servants, of whom he had not a few. He hands the calf over to a boy for cooking. The boy also runs and executes his orders without delay, as everyone does his duty in a well-ordered household. He

* * * * *

1208 The Church Militant comprises all the living faithful striving to live as good Christians, in contrast to the Church Triumphant (those among the blessed in the next world) and the Church Suffering (the poor souls in purgatory).

1209 With 'separated substances,' Erasmus is referring to the angels and the angelic orders, which are immaterial, incorporeal, intellectual creatures (or substances) 'free from all union with matter'; see Etienne Gilson *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Thomas* (New York 1957) 160–4; and Thomas Aquinas *De substantiis separatis seu de angelorum natura* trans Ulrich Klünker (Stuttgart 1989).

does not entrust the choice of the calf to a servant; once selected, he hands it over to a servant, not to shun the service but so that the duty of hospitality could be performed more quickly. Nor, meanwhile, was there any lull in the excellent old man's attention. He prepares curds and milk, and he serves them the calf when cooked; meanwhile, he himself stands by them under the tree as a sign of respect while they eat, as though ready for service. He escorts them as they depart. All this shows us the great enthusiasm with which guests should be received.

Here there is room for the moral commonplaces that a household is like its master, that civility is to be shown to guests with enthusiasm, as though you were not granting a kindness but receiving one, and not only to those who are familiar and have treated one well but also to the unknown and the humble; for initially Abraham thought that they were only men. As to the fact that he says, in the singular number, 'Lord, if I have found grace in your eyes,'[1210] he addresses one because he seemed more respected, and he had no doubts about the intention of the others if he had won this man's assent.

The modesty of the words with which he invites them should also be noted. To men that he thought were weary and hungry he promises only rest beneath a tree, a washing of their feet, and a mouthful of bread, as if he were saying, 'You will cause me no expense or trouble,' though he had nonetheless intended for them the most elegant banquet of which he was capable. Likewise, there is the commonplace that wives ought to be obedient to their husbands, and similarly servants to their masters.[1211]

From this there is ample scope for criticizing those who eagerly enjoy the hospitality of others but shun a guest themselves as though he were a snake, or if they do receive any do so grimly and with annoyance; also against wives who do not allow their husbands to bring a guest into the home and, if they do, disrupt the house with fights and quarrels, just like the wife of Socrates, who upset the dinnerware because the guests sat too long, no longer eating but chatting about philosophy.[1212]

* * * * *

1210 Gen 18:3. This passage, because the three visitors are sometimes addressed in the singular since they speak with one voice, has been traditionally cited as scriptural evidence for the doctrine of the Trinity. See 939 below.

1211 Cf Eph 6:5, 5:22; Col 3:18, 22.

1212 Socrates' wife, Xanthippe, was known for her displeasure with Socrates' way of life, and Socrates for his ability to tolerate her; see eg Diogenes Laertius *Socrates* 2.36–7. The incident Erasmus reports here is recorded in Plutarch's *Moralia* (*De cohibenda ira / On the Control of Anger*) 461.

Now, the fact that, upon being refreshed, they promise childbirth to the barren Sarah signifies that what is expended on guests is not wasted but is repaid by God with much interest, inasmuch as Abraham received a son in return for a calf.[1213] Again, the fact that he received angels as men signifies that whatever is expended on neighbours for the love of God is expended on God, not on man, according to the witness of Christ, 'What you have done for one of the least of these, you have done for me.'[1214]

Moreover, one can also adapt as an example of frugality the fact that a very rich and generous man, when he received three guests, prepared nothing except a calf and a loaf baked under the ashes and added no seasonings except milk and curds, that is, cheese. No mention of wine, for it was a luxury then to drink from a well of good source. Who now would not turn up his nose at hot bread just cooked under the ashes or a calf cooked before it had gone cold after the slaughter? What kind of household was it in which there was not even a loaf except perhaps of coarse bread? For the flour is prepared for the guests as a luxury. But today, if an unexpected visitor arrives in a wealthy house, he will find artfully cooked boar and venison baked in a pastry crust, he will find capons and partridges similarly cooked in a crust, now with a better flavour than if they were fresh. He will find pheasants and rabbits roasted the day before, the more pleasing to the palate because they are tenderer, none of this without spices to season them. He will find expensive birds pickled in spiced brine, to say nothing of the luxury of the fish and about the Attic sweetmeats. It would have been quicker to kill the capons or partridges and tenderize them by soaking them in sweet wine when killed, but antiquity did not yet know these tricks for the palate.[1215] Another example of frugality is the fact that the great patriarch has a tent for a home, a tree for a dining room, and lives not in a palace but in a glen, a rebuke to the wealthy men of our day for their excessive luxury and ostentation.

Also pertinent to character is the fact that Sarah does not come forth into the view of the men but stays within the tent carrying out what her

* * * * *

1213 Gen 18:10

1214 Matt 25:40

1215 This passage suggests that Erasmus had more than a passing acquaintance with sumptuous banqueting in his day, as might be expected of one richly entertained by princes, prelates, magnates, and other wealthy patrons. For the culture of banqueting, see John Varriano *Tastes and Temptations: Food and Art in Renaissance Italy* (Berkeley 2009); Ken Albala *Eating Right in the Renaissance* (Berkeley 2002); idem *The Banquet: Dining in the Great Courts of Late Renaissance Europe* (Urbana 2007).

husband had commanded. The husband stands in the door of the tent, Sarah stands behind the door hidden in the tent, and so they say, 'Where is Sarah, your wife?'[1216] Only the husband knows where his wife is.

Furthermore, the fact that he escorts them as they depart shows that a guest is to be received eagerly when he comes; he is not to be delayed when he wants to depart but escorted dutifully, though today it is considered remarkable hospitality if they use some device[1217] to detain a guest against his will, to his great inconvenience, even if he is hastening to serious business, such as by hiding the reins of his horses or a similar trick. Some will only let him go if he is quite drunk, and they think that this is the correct way to fulfil all the duties of hospitality.

Then the fact that Abraham prays so urgently for the multitude to be spared when he understands the danger facing Sodom shows that it is characteristic of pious men to appeal to the Lord's mercy on behalf of the impious.[1218] It seems evidence of his civility that Abraham does not bombard his guests with questions, 'Where are you coming from?' 'Where are you headed?' 'What is your business?' but escorts them in silence until they reveal their business on their own.

If we accept the distinction made by the more modern writers,[1219] this can be viewed tropologically as adhering to the literal sense, while bringing with it both delight and usefulness in equal measure, and presenting to the eyes of ordinary people examples of the pious men whose actions the Scriptures so warmly commend to us for our imitation. Origen is alert and clever indeed in dealing with this aspect, but mixes in more recondite interpretations.[1220] Chrysostom generally deals only with the literal meaning, but he does so with as much wit as felicity;[1221] he preferred this approach, I think, because this kind of commentary is effective and useful in the training of human character and moves the listener all the more because it is recognized by individuals, pertains to individuals, and is heard with

* * * * *

1216 Gen 18:9

1217 'Device': Chomarat (ASD V-5 225 544n) maintains that Erasmus' *arte* is the adverb 'tightly,' taken with *retineant* 'they detain a guest tightly'; I have taken it rather as the ablative of *ars*, defined by the following phrase, *velut occultatis . . . commento* 'such as by hiding . . . similar trick.' (Translator's note)

1218 Gen 18:23–33

1219 For 'more modern writers,' see 932 n1201 above.

1220 See eg Origen's *Homilia XIII* (on Isaac) GCS 29 113–21; *Homily XIII* in *Homilies on Genesis and Exodus* FOC 71 185–95.

1221 See eg John Chrysostom's *Homilia 51* and *52 in Genesim* PG 54 (1862) 451–63; *Homilies on Genesis* FOC 87 56–78.

greater credibility than allegories or anagogies, which are devised by the interpreter's cleverness, are in a way arbitrary, and therefore have no weight for confirming the dogmas of the faith. But the narrative itself conveys the tropological meaning within it and imparts this to our common understanding, nor is the tropological meaning so different from the grammatical as the disclosure of it suggests; for instance, when an artist shows to viewers what is outstanding and worthy of admiration in a painting executed with great artistry, not all are equally able to judge the picture, but all recognize what is pointed out, just as we have indicated the tropology in this story.

An allegory will be added if Abraham, who has been called the father of all believers,[1222] should play the part of the faithful people, which is the church; this received Christ hospitably, who came as a guest into this world, just as John says, 'Yet as many as received him,'[1223] while the unbelievers are told, 'I was a stranger, and you did not take me in.'[1224] For him the church slaughtered the tenderest and best calf, scorning from love of Christ whatever on earth is lovable, placed before him the most pleasing food, of which he gives witness in the Gospel, 'I have food to eat which you do not know.'[1225] He hungered for the faith of mankind, thirsted for its faith, when he said to the woman of Samaria, 'Give me to drink.'[1226] He escorts her as she goes away, while she scorns what is above the earth and is carried into heaven by desire. Finally Sarah, though barren before, gives birth to Isaac,[1227] that is, 'joy,' while her human desires, of which woman bears the type,[1228] are carried to the spirit through faith, and she is made fruitful with a whole family of virtues that bring a joy that will never be taken away. But it may appear that this allegory comes close to tropology.

It will be more sublime if we should interpret the best and tenderest calf as the immaculate and most gentle Christ who was slaughtered for the world's salvation, for God so loved the world that he handed over his only Son to death for the life of the human race,[1229] or if we should interpret the loaves baked under the ashes[1230] as the recondite understanding of the

* * * * *

1222 Gen 17:5–7; Rom 3:27–4:25; Gal 3:6–29
1223 John 1:12
1224 Matt 25:43
1225 John 4:32
1226 John 4:7
1227 Gen 21:1–7; see also Gen 17:19. The name Isaac means 'he laughs.'
1228 Cf *Enchiridion* CWE 66 48: 'The carnal passions are our Eve, whose glance the clever serpent attracts daily.'
1229 John 3:16
1230 Gen 18:6

Scriptures, three eaten by three, the mystery of the Trinity, and under the tree of Mambra,[1231] a word which in Hebrew means perspicacity; hence they are not eaten by the Jews, who have the veil of Moses[1232] laid upon their hearts and do not acknowledge that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God, being intent upon the letter and not perceiving the hidden meanings of the Law.

There remains anagogy, which opens to us the mystery of the ineffable divine essence, which is one and the same in the three persons Father, Son, and Holy Sprit. He saw three men standing together;[1233] he sees a human appearance and nevertheless falls upon the ground and worships, and now he changes the number and says, 'Lord, if I have found grace in your [*tuis*] eyes,' and then, 'Let your [*vestri*][1234] feet be washed.' And when they had eaten, the number is changed again: 'To whom he said, "Returning I shall come to you [*te*],"'[1235] and then, 'And the Lord said, "Shall I not be able to hide it from Abraham?"'[1236] and 'For I know.'[1237] Again, when he intercedes on behalf of Sodom, standing before the Lord, he says in the singular number, 'Surely you will not destroy the just with the wicked?'[1238] In short, in this whole narration the Lord (never 'Lords') is mentioned in the singular number; in other passages the plural is added so that you may acknowledge one God in three persons: to know him and gaze upon him from close at hand is the blessedness of the Church Triumphant. You will find no place for the interpretation of Scripture to advance beyond this; therefore, we will not be troubled over the names if there is agreement about the subject.

Some have met with criticism for departing too freely from the literal meaning in the Scriptures, embracing the allegorical meaning on the grounds that the least complex meaning does not hold together. On the

* * * * *

1231 Gen 18:1. See Origen *Homilia IV* GCS 29 50–7; *Homily IV* 3 in *Homilies on Genesis and Exodus* FOC 71 106: '*Mambre* in our language is translated "vision" and "sharpness of sight."' Cf Jerome *Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum* CCSL 72 69.

1232 For 'veil of Moses,' see Exod 34:33–5 and 2 Cor 3:7–4:6. See *Annotationes in 2 ad Corinthios* (2 Cor 3:7–4:6) ASD VI-8 354–68.

1233 Gen 18:2, 10, 17, 23

1234 The Latin word *vestri* implies more than one person while *tuis* and *te* are singular. (Translator's note)

1235 Gen 18:14

1236 Gen 18:17–19

1237 Gen 18:19: 'For I know' (*Scio enim*).

1238 Gen 18:23

other hand, some have so hated tropes that they have felt that all Scripture should be interpreted in the sense that the actual words express literally.

Among these were the Anthropomorphites,[1239] who thought that God was physical and of human appearance because they read that man was made in God's image, especially since Scripture everywhere attributes to God human members, face, mouth, eyes, ears, hands, arms, feet. By a similar error they believed that God was moved and changed by human emotions, because they read that he is angry and is placated, rages and turns to mercy, does something and regrets doing it, does not know and gets to know, and finally hates and loves, though no change ever happens to God.

The same error gave us the Euchites,[1240] who spent their lives in idleness mumbling a countless number of psalms every day because they had read in the Gospel that one should always pray and never stop.[1241]

And there has been no lack of those who have cut themselves because they read in the Gospel that those who had castrated themselves for the kingdom of God would be blessed.[1242]

And all that misled the Chiliasts[1243] was understanding a passage of Revelation without a trope.

Some also tried to pass forty days and nights without food because they read that this was done by the Lord.[1244]

And there is no lack today of people who walk with their loins girded

* * * * *

1239 See eg Augustine's response to the Anthropomorphites' teachings in *Letter* 148 (a memorandum for his holy brother, Fortunatian) WSA II-2 350–9; and *De haeresibus* CCSL 46 590; *The Heresies* WSA I-18 46–7. See also Jerome *Contra Ioannem Hierosolymitanum* PL 23 (1845) 363–4 (*To Pammachus against John of Jerusalem*) NPNF 2nd series 6 430; and *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 272 n135.

1240 Euchites: 'praying people' (from the Syrian and Greek words meaning 'to pray'); this heretical sect was also known as the Messalians. See *Modus orandi Deum* CWE 70 179 and n254; see also 'Euchites' ODCC 571.

1241 The gospel reference is to Luke 18:1 and 21:36; see also Eph 6:18; 1 Thess 5:17.

1242 Matt 19:12. Origen is said to have castrated himself for this reason; see Eusebius *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.8.1–5 PG 20 (1857) 535. See Erasmus' comment on this in his *Vita Origenis* LB VIII 428A–D.

1243 Chiliasts, from the Greek word 'thousand' (χίλιοι); same as Millenarians, referring to those who believe literally the words of Rev 20:1–6 that tell of the beast (Satan) being chained in the bottomless pit for one thousand years, during which time the Chiliasts live and reign with Christ; but after the millenium Satan will emerge to 'seduce the nations' of the earth. See *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 311 n77 and 346–7; and 'Chiliasm' in *The Encyclopedia of Protestantism* ed Hans J. Hillerbrand (New York 2004) I 629–32.

1244 Matt 4:2; Luke 4:2

because the Lord tells his people to have their loins girded,[1245] of people who carry wooden crosses in their hands because they have read, 'He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.'[1246]

In Africa – which according to the saying is always producing some new wonder[1247] – there were some who deliberately attacked the banquets of pagans for the sole purpose of being killed by them,[1248] some who even used threats to compel others to be killed because they had read, 'He who has lost his life will find it for all eternity.'[1249]

It showed the same superstition when the Donatists,[1250] meeting at the emperor's order to confer with the Catholics about a disputed matter under a judge delegated to hear the case, refused so stubbornly to sit when directed by the imperial count[1251] that even the judge was forced to hear the case standing, contrary to custom.[1252] When asked why they were unwilling to

* * * * *

1245 Luke 12:35; cf Exod 12:11.

1246 Matt 10:38. For Erasmus' interpretation of this pericope in Matthew, see *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 179–81; see also Mark 8:34; *Paraphrasis in Marcum* CWE 49 106–7; Luke 9:23; and *Paraphrasis in Lucam* LB VII 370B–C.

1247 *Adagia* III vii 9; Pliny *Naturalis historia* 8.42

1248 This group was called the Circumcellions (or Circellions); see ODCC 353: 'They were so named because they lived or moved around (*circum*) martyrs' shrines (*cellae*) from which they drew physical sustenance, but they preferred themselves to be known as "Agonistici," ie "soldiers (of Christ)."' See also *Augustine* 193–4. Erasmus' source for this group is most likely Augustine's writings, which contain many references to *agonistici*: see eg *Contra Gaudentium* CSEL 53 199–274; *De agone christiano* CSEL 41 99–138; and *Enarratio in psalmum 132* CCSL 40 1927–31; *Exposition on Psalm 132* (3, 6) WSA III-20 176–7, 180–1.

1249 Matt 10:39; Mark 8:35; Luke 17:33; John 12:25. See eg *Paraphrasis in Marcum* CWE 49 107–8; and *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 153–4.

1250 The Donatists were a large schismatic group of Christians in North Africa from the third century to the time of the Vandal invasion in the eighth century; they refused to unite with Caecilianus, Catholic bishop of Carthage, who had been consecrated by a bishop who had handed over the sacred books (*traditor*) to Roman agents during the great persecution of Diocletian (303–11). The recusants elected their own bishop, who was soon succeeded by Donatus, who then gave his name to the schism. On the Donatists, see 'Donatism' ODCC 499–500; W.H.C. Frend *The Donatist Church: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa* (Oxford 1952); and 'Donatist Bishops' in *Augustine* 281–4, 'Donatus, Donatism' ibidem 284–7. For Erasmus on Augustine's measures against the Donatists, see Tracy (1) 165–6.

1251 This seems to be a slip of memory: Erasmus writes *comes* 'count' for *cognitor* 'attorney' / 'representative.' (A. Dalzell)

1252 This story is related by Augustine in *Breviculus collationis cum Donatistis* CCSL 149 259–306; PL 43 613–50.

sit, they replied that they were influenced by the words of the Psalm, 'I did not sit in the council of vanity and I will not enter with those that do injustice,'[1253] criticizing with these words the Catholics with whom they had to dispute, for they considered them as vain and mendacious and impious. But he wittily mocked their superstition by replying, 'If the verse of the Psalm influenced you, you also should not have entered this council, for it is added right there "and I will not enter with those that do injustice." '[1254]

It is said that even today the Sabbatarians are sprouting again, who observe the rest on the seventh day with unbelievable superstition.[1255]

From the same source flowed the superstition of the Pharisees,[1256] who carried about the words of the Law on fringes and phylacteries so that they would always be in view, because in Deuteronomy 6 the Lord instructed, 'And these will be the words that I command you today in your heart, and you will tell them to your children, and you will think upon them sitting in your house and walking on a journey, sleeping and rising, and you will bind them as a sign on your hand, and they will be and will move between your eyes,'[1257] etc. Being too intent upon the words, they did not understand that tropes of this sort commend the intense study of and meditation upon the Law.

Even in these times there are said to be Christians who use a hot iron to brand the forehead of the baptized because they read in the Gospel, 'He himself will baptize you in the spirit and in fire,'[1258] not understanding that spirit and fire signify the vigour of faith and of evangelical charity.

A very similar superstition affects those who, because they have read and accepted the words 'Who comes to me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children, brothers, and sisters,'[1259] think that they owe

* * * * *

1253 Ps 26:4 (LXX 25:4); see Augustine *Breviculus collationis cum Donatistis* CCSL 149 259–306; PL 43 613–50, especially 634.

1254 Ps 26:4 (LXX 25:4)

1255 Sabbatarians: groups that observed the Sabbath rather than the Lord's Day with extreme rigour, including fasting; see ODCC 1433; and K.L. Parker *The English Sabbath: A Study of the Doctrine and Discipline from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge 1988). See also Augustine *Letter* 36 WSA II-1 124–42; *De concordia* CWE 65 214–5 and 214 n418; and *Hyperaspistes* 2 CWE 77 635 and n1269.

1256 Cf Matt 23:5. See *Annotationes in Matthaeum* ASD VI-5 298–300; *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 313–4.

1257 Deut 6:6–8

1258 Matt 3:11; see *Annotationes in Matthaeum* ASD VI-5 120.

1259 Luke 14:26

nothing to their parents, nothing to their children if they hide away in some college of monks and even abandon a bride against her will and opposition if intercourse has not yet occurred.[1260] If a Christian owes honour and obedience even to pagan parents so long as piety is not violated, how much more respect does a Christian owe to Christian parents! And if Paul tells a Christian wife to remain in cohabitation and obedience to an unbelieving and idolatrous husband provided he does not seek a divorce,[1261] how much less appropriate is it for a groom to desert a bride for the sake of a religious life that is artificially contrived?[1262] Indeed, how is it consistent for the Lord, who elsewhere instructs us to love even our enemies,[1263] to instruct us here to pursue parents and wives with hatred? Here hate is not the perverse emotion of malevolence but the strength of faith by which we overcome natural piety with spiritual piety whenever it happens that one of the two must be abandoned. Otherwise, if it were right to desert a wife or parents for the sake of the monastic life, it would be permissible by the same reasoning to terminate life; but life is not to be scorned except when a critical moment occurs such that one must either commit an impiety or face death, such as when the persecutor says, 'Either burn incense to Jupiter or offer your neck to the axe.'[1264]

Therefore, just as people tend towards Judaism when they exclude tropes and allegories from the Scriptures, making a carnal law out of the Law that according to Paul is spiritual,[1265] so also those who reject the basic meaning[1266] when no necessity so compels subvert the foundation and strength of Scripture, for they make it a matter of opinion, with the result that it is now human rather than divine. As I have said, this is quite often a stumbling block for Origen but sometimes for others as well, among them Ambrose, a great light of the church, in whom nothing should be criticized

* * * * *

1260 Cf *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* 7:39 ASD VI-8 144–91. See also *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 283–7, especially 284 and n234.

1261 See 1 Cor 7:10–16.

1262 Erasmus emphasizes that a religious order, unlike the church, is not of divine but of human origin.

1263 Matt 5:44; Luke 6:27 and 35

1264 Erasmus perhaps alludes to Pliny's letter to Trajan (96) as well as the many accounts of the lives of Christian martyrs.

1265 Rom 7:14: 'For we know that the law is spiritual.'

1266 'The basic meaning' (*sensus infimus*): Erasmus' position is that, if there is a straightforward, plain, intelligible meaning (the historical sense or the grammatical sense), then the reader should accept it, rather than rejecting this sense of Scripture to search for the spiritual senses, such as the allegorical.

unless that serves the instruction of preachers;[1267] for just as Jerome revealed the errors of Origen so that his books could be read by the orthodox with less risk,[1268] so it is useful to indicate certain lapses in authors of great renown as blemishes so that they may be read with greater profit, with less risk. Nevertheless, I shall not burden the reader here with many illustrations; I shall offer a few as examples.

St Ambrose, in treating the passage of the Gospel in which Peter is said to have denied the Lord three times,[1269] twists the whole business into an allegory or tropology in order either to excuse or to diminish the apostle's crime.

First, the fact that it is written that he stood by the coals because it was chilly is interpreted as a chill of the mind, and so far correctly, for someone in whom the vigour of faith and warmth of charity have cooled is close to denial and lacks only a pressing occasion. But what he adds is forced ('It was a chill of the mind, not of the body'), and likewise what came a little before ('If we consider the time, it could not have been cold'); for what prevents the night being frosty during the vernal equinox, when at Rome even the nights of the summer solstice have their chills?

He adds that 'it was so strange for Peter to have been able to sin that his sin could not be understood even by the evangelists,' because (I think) they do not report Peter's denial in the same way or else report it in vague language. Now, who would not see at once that this statement is rather strained?

Then Ambrose interprets Peter's response when charged by the portress with belonging to the group that was with the Galilean or with Jesus of Nazareth ('I do not know what you are saying') as though these were the words not of a man denying but of one separating himself from

* * * * *

1267 Chomarat calls attention to the incoherence of Erasmus' Latin in this sentence and suggests what he means is 'the errors of the great authors can be useful for the instruction of beginners if one points these out to them.' See ASD V-5 230–1 680–1nn.

1268 See Jerome Ep 51 NPNF 2nd series 6 83–9; Jerome protests eg: 'I grieve, and grieve bitterly, to see numbers of my brothers ... deceived by his [Origen's] persuasive arguments, and made by his most perverse teaching the food of the devil' (87). See also Ep 84 175–81 and Ep 124 238–44; and Elizabeth A. Clark *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton 1992).

1269 Matt 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:54–62; John 18:15–27. See Ambrose *Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam* CCSL 14 366–73. Erasmus' discussion of Ambrose's exegesis takes up all four gospel accounts together.

the woman's discovery. If this is true, how is the Evangelist's text consistent, since he says, 'But he denied before everyone, saying "I do not know what you are saying"'? If this is not the first denial, how then will it be true what the Lord had said would come to pass, 'Before the cock crows twice you will deny me three times,' especially when there follows in Matthew, 'And again he denied'? If what he said to the previous serving girl, 'I do not know what you are saying,' is not a denial, how is it that Matthew says, 'And again he denied' of his abjuring the Lord to the other serving girl?

Again, there is an equally strained interpretation when he takes the words in which Peter denies that he was with Jesus of Galilee or with Jesus of Nazareth as though Peter, when he said that he did not know Jesus of Galilee or of Nazareth, were professing that Jesus' nature was divine: 'I do not know as a Galilean,' he says, 'I do not know as a Nazarene him whom I know as the Son of God: let men take their names from places, but no land can name the Son of God, whose majesty no place confines.' First of all, it is certain that Ambrose's interpretation is not what the evangelists meant; in any event, denying Jesus as the Son of Man and denying him as the Son of God involve the same impiety.

But what follows is even feebler. Peter, on being accused of being one of those with Jesus of Galilee, replied, 'I am not'; this he twists as though Peter did not deny Christ but rejected the word 'was' (which implied eternity). 'For those who begin to be were not,' he says; 'that is to say, only he was, who was in the beginning.' Yet 'was' is not in itself a word expressing eternity, but the expression 'In the beginning was' *is* an expression of eternity, for what was before all creation must lack a beginning. Very similar is 'I am not,' which he tacks on immediately; for being belongs to someone who always is, but neither Peter nor the evangelist meant this.

Again, when he was attacked for having been one of the disciples of the Galilean, according to Mark, he denies it a second time. This is how Ambrose excuses him: 'Peter denied that he was one of them; he did not deny Christ. He had denied the associations of men, not the grace of God; he had denied that he was one of those who were with the Galilean, he did not deny that he was with the Son of God.' But granting that this is one of three denials, how is Christ's prediction true, 'You will deny me three times,' if he did not deny Christ?

Then, when he was pressed all the more by the bystanders, who even brought his speech into the argument as well as his physical appearance, he denied it for a third time, with a curse, that he knew the man. 'He was right to deny as man the one that he knew as God,' Ambrose says. Finally he admits that Peter denied, but says that he did not perjure himself. He proves this with a clever line of reasoning that I do not quite follow, saying, 'Finally,

when an oath is required, then his response is cautious; for though Peter denied, he nevertheless did not perjure himself because he had mentioned that neither would God lie.' This means, I think, that according to Mark, when Peter was first named by the serving girl as having been with Jesus, he only denied, saying, 'I am not aware of and do not know what you are saying.' Named a second time by the serving girl and exposed, he denied again, and nothing else is added. Ambrose says, 'So that you may know that the evangelist granted more to truth than to grace'; truth, I think, is what he is calling the simple narration of the deed, grace the mystical meaning that he wants to be hidden in Peter's words. When he was pressed a third time by the bystanders, Peter denied with an oath and an execration, stating, 'I do not know that man of whom you speak.' Ambrose calls 'I do not know that man of whom you speak' a precautionary statement [*cautio*]; and so he did not commit perjury because he had not promised Christ he would not deny God when he said: 'I will not deny you,' that is, the one whom he once professed to be the Son of God. Therefore, in denying the man he did not swear falsely.

Again, when he says, 'I am not,' Ambrose gives the excuse that he was an apostle not of a man but of Christ, just as Paul says that he did not receive his gospel from man or through man but through Jesus Christ,[1270] and his aim in pursuing this passage is to show that Paul denied Christ as much as Peter did, except that Peter concealed his meaning, Paul expressed his.

And, to skip over a lot to avoid boring the reader, Ambrose defends Luke's words, that 'Peter, when called, replied "I do not know him,"' with this fabrication: 'He spoke well; it would be rash if he said that he knew him whom the human mind cannot comprehend, for no one but the Father knows the Son.' So when Luke says that he is addressed again and replies, 'I am not,' he glosses this over, saying, 'He preferred to deny himself rather than Christ.' When addressed the third time he replied, according to Luke, 'I do not know what you are saying'; Ambrose interprets this as 'I do not understand your profane talk.'

But because one could object, 'Where is the credibility of the Lord, who said "You will deny me three times," if Peter did not deny Christ and did not lie, or why did Peter weep so bitterly when he was himself again?' he slips out of this by saying that Peter is acknowledging as a fault the fact that he professed Christ obscurely and in ambiguous terms as God and man when he ought to have done so honestly and distinctly.

* * * * *

1270 Gal 1:12

Who does not understand that this is a strained interpretation contrary to the meaning of Scripture so that we are now excusing impiety in thus accepting that denying Christ the man is denying that he is only a man? But meanwhile, while he is toying with his fabrication, a lesson is being missed, which it is particularly important to inculcate: that a man, however strong, can do nothing of himself if he trusts in his own strength and if he does not depend totally upon the grace of God, since Peter, who surpassed the other apostles in the strength of his faith and love towards the Lord and had spoken so boastfully (and surely sincerely) about himself,[1271] was so wretchedly paralyzed at the words of some woman – and what would he do in the face of torture and death?

There is a tolerable allegory in the fact that Peter denied in the house of Caiphas (Christ is denied in the synagogue;[1272] in the church there is a sincere and constant profession), likewise in the fact that Peter burst into tears only after Jesus looked at him,[1273] also in the fact that the striking lapses of pious men sometimes do more to build the church than the innocence of others.

So Peter's denial has taught everyone not to trust in human strength. It has taught that no one who has lapsed into wrongdoing has hope of coming to his senses again unless Christ deems him worthy of his gaze. It has taught that no wrongdoing is so dreadful that the tears of penitence cannot wash it away, and it is a great solace to all Christians, just like the example of the woman in the Gospel who sinned.[1274] Therefore these things and many others that Origen pursues carefully could be adapted to a tropological interpretation, namely that Peter lapsed because he followed Jesus from a distance, that he mingled with Jews, that it was night-time and cold, that he had not yet heard the cock crow, that he did not weep until he left the priest's hall. He does not, however, excuse Peter's sin but extenuates it only with a single pretext, that he denied the Lord when he had not yet received the Holy Spirit, 'since' (as John says) 'no one can profess the Lord Jesus except in the Holy Spirit,'[1275] and therefore forgiveness was available to Peter.

* * * * *

1271 Cf Matt 16:15–19; Luke 22:32–3; Matt 26:35; see *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 199–204.

1272 Caiphas was the high priest (Matt 26:3), and for this reason Erasmus can understand his house as representing the synagogue. Matt 26:57–8 mentions it is where the teachers of the law and the elders were assembled.

1273 Luke 22:61–2

1274 Cf Luke 7:36–50.

1275 Erasmus is not quoting John, but 1 Cor 12:3; see *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* ASD VI-8 236–8.

But it is difficult for people to be renewed to penitence if they deny Christ either in words or in deeds after receiving the Spirit, crucifying him again for themselves and regarding his sacrosanct blood as polluted. Discussing these things before the congregation is, I say, neither useless nor without appeal, as also is the fact that, according to Matthew, Peter's only response to the first call was 'I do not know what you are saying';[1276] when he was confronted by another serving girl, he denied with an oath; on the third occasion, when he was pressed by the bystanders, he added an execration to the oath and cursed himself. Thus the person who has once withdrawn from Christ, unless he is called back through the Lord's mercy, always slips from bad to worse until he is given over to a perverse understanding, just as Peter, descending from lying to perjury, from perjury to execration, would perhaps have come at last to hang himself with Judas[1277] if Jesus had not turned his eyes upon him in good time.

But Jerome in his commentaries, if I am not mistaken, criticizes Ambrose's violent distortion in excusing Peter's sin with 'I know that certain men of pious feeling towards the apostle Peter have interpreted this passage by saying that Peter denied not God but man, and that the meaning is "I do not know the man because I know the God." The thoughtful reader will understand how silly it is to defend an apostle by making God guilty of a lie.'[1278] Thus Jerome.

A similar distortion is involved when Ambrose attributes a verse from Psalm 23, 'Lift up your gates, princes, and be raised up, eternal gates, and the King of Glory will enter,'[1279] to the angels that had remained in their former state, exhorting those who were wavering and had not yet adopted the evil plan of revolting against God to recover their senses; and he thinks that some did recover their senses, and this was the King of Glory entering, though no passage of Scripture anywhere mentions anything of the kind. He seems to have taken this from Origen, for Jerome also touches upon something similar in this psalm even though he does not affirm that any recovered their senses.[1280]

* * * * *

1276 Matt 26:70

1277 Matt 27:5

1278 Jerome *Commentariorum in Matthaeum libri* IV 4.1441–8 (26.72) CCSL 77 261–2.

1279 Ps 24:7 (Vulg 23:7). Erasmus refers to Ambrose's *De fide* (*Exposition of the Christian Faith*) 4.1.9–14 NPNF 2nd series 10 263–4. Erasmus' criticism may be well taken, but Ambrose is using this passage to refute the Arians who 'call Him [the Son] fallible.' This is an example of what Erasmus observed earlier (506, 914, 916) where orthodox exegetes sometimes stretch their interpretations too much in order to refute heretics.

1280 See Pseudo-Jerome *Breviarium in Ps 23* PL 26 939B–942C.

More shameless is the error of those who base a fabricated allegory on a lie. A man that St Jerome mentions when expounding Ephesians 5 came close to this fault;[1281] for this man was speaking before an assembly of ordinary people that Jerome attended, and, exactly as though he were seeking the crowd's applause in a theatre rather than interpreting the mysteries of Scripture, he applied the Apostle's words, 'Rise, you who sleep, and rise up from the dead, and Christ will shine upon you'[1282] (or 'will touch you') to Christ hanging upon the cross, who, he argued, used these words to address Adam, who was buried there right under the cross so that he could be sprinkled with the blood of Christ. And to make this fiction more probable, 'as though joining thread with thread,'[1283] as they say, he added another figment of his imagination, that the place was called Calvary because the head of the old man, namely Adam, was buried there, though Jerome informs us that Adam was buried in Hebron at Arbe,[1284] not on Mount Calvary; and so it was either folly to make assertions contrary to Scripture or surely rashness to affirm something that is so far from being certain that it is hardly likely. Then he changed Scripture, and instead of ἐπιφαύσει σοι, that is 'will shine upon you,' he read ἐφάψεταί σου, that is, 'will touch you.' Moreover, though there were copies both among the Greeks and among the Latins that also had this or a similar reading, nevertheless the very tenor of the Apostle's language shows that the former reading is the true one. Nevertheless, this fiction received remarkable applause from the ignorant crowd, which often prefers novelty to truth; but what is appropriate is not for a preacher to adapt his words to the pleasure of the crowd, but rather to make the people become accustomed to taking pleasure in what is best.[1285]

This carelessness of ancient writers has passed down to later ones, some of whom have even thought it elegant to grab Scripture by the neck[1286]

* * * * *

1281 Eph 5:14; see *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* trans Ronald E. Heine (Oxford 2002) 224. Jerome remarks on how well this 'theatrical marvel' went over, but states: 'I mention one thing which I know: that understanding does not fit with the interpretation and coherence of this passage.' Jerome *Commentariorum in epistolam ad Ephesios libri tres* 5.14 PL 26 (1845) 526B.

1282 Eph 5:14

1283 *Adagia* I viii 59 *Linum lino nectis* 'You join thread with thread.'

1284 Jerome *Commentariorum in Matthaeum libri* IV 4.1684 (27.33) CCSL 77 270.

1285 Erasmus makes clear that, although pleasure (*delectare*) is one of the principal goals of the orator for the general purpose of persuasion, the scrupulous handling of subject matter must predominate, which means above all adhering to the *sensus grammaticus* of Scripture so that the audience's pleasure does not come at the expense of the true meaning of the passage.

1286 For 'grab Scripture by the neck,' see *Adagia* IV ix 50 *Obtorto collo* 'By the neck.'

and force it to the remotest possible meaning. There are commentaries extant by a certain person (who will go unnamed) who took the words of the prophet Habbakkuk, 'The skins of the land of Madian will be troubled,'[1287] which were meant literally to refer to the tents of Ethiopia but according to the moral sense can be applied to the wicked whose conscience must one day be troubled by fear of judgment, and twisted it to the flaying of Bartholomew:[1288] all too shamelessly even if the story had been true, now even more shamelessly because the church rejects it as fictitious, for who would say of an apostle who has been flayed that his 'skins were troubled'?

What I shall report now I have neither read nor seen myself but learned from a thoroughly serious man who heard it in person. The location will be suppressed so as not to offend anyone too fastidious. A certain man came out of school having already gained some degree in theology in the most populous city of the entire district, intending to give a specimen of himself in a very crowded assembly. He had learned the twelve signs of the zodiac and was turning them very carefully to an allegory, while many marvelled; some who had a better nose smiled.[1289] How useless was that effort in which the man had tormented himself for three or four months! (Those who are going to speak there on certain days are generally told this far in advance so that they may be the more prepared when they come.)

He also related that another doctor of theology, no ordinary one but a man outstandingly learned both in scholastic theology and in all the liberal disciplines (for he was known to me as a friend), in the same city, in the most crowded place of all, after three months' preparation tried to explain the mystery of the Holy Trinity from the most elementary points of grammar, adapting it to the agreement of noun and verb. When I discussed with this theologian the various similitudes through which learned men have

* * * * *

1287 Hab 3:7. Erasmus follows Jerome's exegesis; see *Commentarii in prophetas minores* 2.417–28 CCSL 76A 629. Erasmus has Folly make the same comment; see *Moria* CWE 27 146 and CWE 28 486–7 nn563–4.

1288 According to *The Golden Legend* St Bartholomew, whose name means the 'son of one who suspends the waters, or son of one who suspends himself,' went to Lycaonia, India, and Greater Armenia; there he was flayed alive and (some also say) beheaded. There are, however, many variations on Bartholomew's activities and martyrdom; most include death by flaying. Apart from the possible association of the name Bartholomew and his flayed skin with the martyr's 'troubled' death, nothing else seems to suggest a connection with Hab 3:7. See 'Saint Bartholomew' in *Legenda aurea* II 109.

1289 For 'a better nose' see *Adagia* I vi 81 *Odorari, et similes aliquot metaphorae* 'Scenting out, and sundry metaphors of this kind.' The adage gives a list of all the meanings of 'nose' (*nasus*); the relevant meaning here is 'critical judgment': 'the nose by itself became proverbial for critical judgment.'

tried to depict an image of the Trinity, he said that there was no more appropriate way of drawing a similitude of one being in three persons than in the mathematical figure of the triangle, in which there are three equal lines in the same surface. I am not mentioning this to ridicule it, especially since it was said in a private conversation. That former effort in such a crowded gathering fell extremely flat. Why waste words? This liberty has gradually reached the point where such things have begun to be pursued by great theologians as the highest praise.

I myself heard a doctor of theology, laureate at Paris, of St Dominic's order, quite outstandingly learned and civil, who throughout the whole of Lent introduced some elements from the gospel parable of the prodigal son,[1290] imagining in a lighthearted rather than serious manner what had happened to him when he left his father, what when he returned, as follows:[1291] 'Where now is our not so frugal son? What is he up to? He's come to a watermill. He's staying there.' Here witnesses were produced from Scripture about rotary mill wheels and applied to his wandering off. The next day: 'Where now is our prodigal? What is he doing? He's found a cookshop. What's going on there? He's eating. What kind of food? Tongues cooked in a flour paste. Some call them "meat pasties."' Here were produced proof texts about men's dangerous tongues! Some such invention was similarly adduced every day; some perhaps titillated the ears of the people, but I do not know how much this profited their minds. Yet Holy Scripture is too fertile for someone to require one to spend an hour on inventions of this sort, and if the listener needs to be entertained, Scripture has its own gardens where one may refresh the mind more appropriately.

Now, I am aware that, among those who profess the contemplative life and consider themselves contemplatives, there are books in which allegories were added to narratives invented with a similar zeal. I shall offer one as an example: 'A certain weary traveller seeing the stump of a tree sat down on it; yet it was not a tree stump but a dragon sleeping with its body curled up, and the beast, wakened by the weight and warmth of the man sitting on him, raised his head and devoured the traveller.' Here the allegory was contrived, 'The traveller is every Christian who desires to find rest in this world but finds death when he seeks rest; hence let whoever wishes to complete his journey safely withdraw from the world and become a monk.'

Yet even this is more tolerable than the practice of those who contrive allegorical interpretations from things that are obviously false. With my own ears I myself heard someone, not learned but commended by the reputation

* * * * *

1290 Luke 15:11–32

1291 For a similar recollection of this event, see *Ratio* 282:16–24.

of his order and grave on account of the authority of his office, who to fill up the time at the end of a serious address (for it was a Sunday in Lent) added some stories of which I shall relate one as an example. He was saying that in some place or other there was an ἀνώνυμος [nameless] bird adorned with the most beautiful feathers, that these feathers are shed at certain times of the year, and that, when featherless, the bird emits pathetic cries and does not cease at all until the feathers grow in again. Here is the allegory: 'That bird designates man, whose feathers are virtues, which are summoned back by the laments of penitence when they have fallen off.' The church was packed with listeners, among whom were more than forty scholars, and among these some doctors. The Gospel was from John 9, how Jesus restored the sight of a man born blind.[1292] The Evangelist's narrative is so lengthy that a proper exposition of it could occupy an entire hour and hold the congregation's interest. If these things are ignored, what is left except for the preacher in the pulpit to relate and interpret his own dreams! Yet there has been no lack of men who have stroked the ears of an assembly with fictitious dreams. But I mentioned this reluctantly, and so I gladly move on to other topics; necessity has driven me to point out certain things by way of example. It is for the thoughtful preacher to prevent himself, as best he can, from gaining such a reputation.

Furthermore, to get our discussion back to where we had begun, those who remove either types or allegories from the Scriptures and those who reject the literal meaning in pursuit of an allegory when no necessity demands it are equally impious; rather, a sober moderation should be observed in these things.

The difference between an allegory and a type is that we use 'types' and 'figures' for an incident that is being described in order to signify something else, as, for example, when the bronze serpent hanging on the tree trunk represented Christ lifted onto the cross for the salvation of all believers.[1293] Allegory lies more in teaching and instruction, such as the directives that the law of Moses gives about building the temple, about the garb of the priests,[1294] about the rituals of sacrifice, about circumcision, and about clean and unclean foods. But as far as treatment is concerned, the method is the same for types and for allegories.

* * * * *

1292 John 9:1–41

1293 See Num 21:6–9 and John 12:32–6.

1294 See book 1 CWE 67 301–19 for Erasmus' interpretation of the robes and other paraphernalia of the high priest Aaron as an allegory of the preacher, his commission, life and instruction.

There are two ways of avoiding an allegorical or typological interpretation: one when we understand the incident described in a literal way as having happened or being about to happen in the future and admit no esoteric meaning, for example if someone were to say that the rock from which water flowed for the Hebrews in the desert did not signify Christ,[1295] or that Moses' face covered by the veil does not signify the Jews rejecting the grace of the gospel that was unlocked for everyone through Christ,[1296] and likewise if someone should say that what was predicted by the prophets concerning the kingdom of Christ has not been fulfilled because, in the literal sense, the things promised do not appear to have happened, for the prophets intended a spiritual kingdom; the Jews are waiting for an earthly kingdom. Departing from a type in this way is impious; for since the literal meaning is like the body of Scripture and its more recondite meaning like the soul, whoever rejects the best part of Scripture is of course departing from it. Let this serve, by way of example, on the subject of types. Someone who thought that Moses' instructions about victims and about the choice of foods[1297] should be observed today according to their literal meaning would be impious in a comparable manner, as would someone who thought that it would be pleasing to God to cut off his genitals from love of chastity because the Lord pronounces blessed those who had castrated themselves on account of the kingdom of God;[1298] for according to the Lord's meaning, whoever has cast aside the pursuit of sexual pleasure out of zeal for piety has cut himself off. These are the ways in which one wrongly rejects a typological or allegorical interpretation.

There is another, and a proper, way of departing from a typological interpretation when due honour is given to the literal meaning as a sort of underlying base, but a mystical meaning is drawn over this for the listeners' greater benefit, one for instance that does not deny that Eve was corrupted by the serpent's words and invited her husband to share in her crime but adds to this foundation the allegory or tropology that Satan uses deceitful promises to tempt man's baser feelings so that he departs from God's

* * * * *

1295 Exod 17:6

1296 Exod 34:33–5; see also 939, 959, 962, and 1085 for Erasmus' use of these biblical images.

1297 Until the nineteenth century Moses was believed to be the author of the Pentateuch (the Torah), as Erasmus' attribution here indicates. For Moses' prescriptions, see Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 (eating); and Leviticus 1–7 (sacrifices).

1298 Matt 19:12

teachings, and that even reason is drawn by the emotions of the flesh into consenting to crime. Eve ate because she was persuaded;[1299] Adam was defeated rather than seduced, not because of the serpent's persuasion but because of his excessive love towards his wife. Our Eve is the flesh; our Adam is reason or spirit. The flesh is weak but the spirit is willing.[1300] Likewise with Solomon's teaching, 'A soft answer turns away wrath, harsh words stir up rage.'[1301] What is said is true according to the literal meaning, that an angry man should be calmed with gentler words, and if you exacerbate him with harsh words, his anger now turns to rage; yet someone who adapts the sentiment to a sinner returning to his senses is not in error. God is offended by the sins of men; if they come to their senses, acknowledge their guilt, and flee to his mercy, they break God's anger and threats. But if they persist in their wickedness and say in their heart, though warned, 'There is no God,'[1302] now God's anger turns to fury and those who scorn the patience of a God who invites to penitence are handed over to a corrupt understanding.

As we suggested earlier, a departure from the literal meaning, which Paul calls the letter,[1303] is sometimes compelled by necessity, sometimes encouraged by its usefulness. Necessity compels it when there is absurdity in the words. There is obvious absurdity in the Lord's words when he commands the removal and flinging away of the right eye if it offends, or the amputation and discarding of the hand,[1304] or hating one's father, mother, brothers, sisters and one's own soul besides;[1305] when he pronounces blessed those who have castrated themselves on account of the kingdom of God;[1306] likewise, when St Paul commands the mortification of our earthly members[1307] and the heaping of burning coals upon the head of an enemy.[1308] Usefulness encourages this approach whenever there is little or no value in a literal understanding of the words of Scripture or, if there is any, there is yet greater profit in the mystical meaning. If you stick to the literal meaning, I do not see what value is to be found in the story of how Jacob increased

* * * * *

1299 Gen 3:1–7
1300 Matt 26:41; Mark 14:38
1301 Prov 15:1
1302 Cf Ps 14:1 (Vulg 13:1) and Ps 53:1 (Vulg 52:1). The full line reads: 'The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."'
1303 2 Cor 3:6
1304 Matt 5:29, 30; Mark 9:42[43], 46[47]
1305 Luke 14:26
1306 Matt 19:12
1307 Col 3:5
1308 Rom 12:20

his flock,[1309] how Laban tricked him by substituting Leah for Rachel,[1310] unless perhaps someone were to draw from this an example of a mind both temperate and constant as in Jacob, who though disappointed by such an insult did not abandon his friendship but accepted an extremely unfair condition, then for fourteen years abstained from intercourse with a most lovely maiden whom he loved beyond measure, while today one can hardly convince grooms to control themselves for a single month without coupling secretly with their brides, sometimes not even waiting for the age that makes girls capable of enduring a man. Again, when Solomon urges us in our youth to store up nourishment for our old age in accordance with the example of the ant,[1311] the admonition is not useless but of the sort that a pagan would drum into his son; yet the profit is much more fruitful if we interpret this whole life as the age in which it is granted to us to behave well: whoever neglects this opportunity has a winter after death in which it is not permitted to do good works, but each man receives a reward according to what he did in his body, whether good or bad.

So we are driven away from the letter by necessity whenever the words of Scripture contain an obvious falsehood or absurdity or some other meaning that, unless you apply a trope, is in conflict with Christ's teaching and pious character. For example, when the prophet says, 'He will sit in solitude and will raise himself over himself,'[1312] the literal language does not make sense, for no one can raise himself over himself, but it is faith that lifts the human mind beyond human nature. Likewise, what the Psalm prophesies about Christ, 'You will walk over an asp and a basilisk,'[1313] etc, is false if it is read literally, for nowhere is it read that the Lord or any of the saints did anything of the kind. This falsity, however, is not in Scripture but in the person who is misinterpreting Scripture, since the writer intended nothing of the sort. Examples of absurdity are everywhere to hand, such as when God says in Genesis, 'I regret that I made man,'[1314] for God does not experience regret, and again when he says to Abraham, 'I shall go down and see whether or not it is a genuine outcry that comes to me, so that I may know,'[1315] for God does not experience ignorance. The passage of Paul at

* * * * *

1309 Gen 30:37–43
1310 Gen 29:16–27
1311 Prov 30:25
1312 Lam 3:28
1313 Ps 91:13 (Vulg 90:13)
1314 Gen 6:6–7
1315 Gen 18:21

Romans 12 that I mentioned a moment ago, 'Doing this, you will heap coals of fire upon his head,'[1316] is similar. Here the absurdity is joined with falseness; someone who gives food and drink to an enemy is quite far from someone who heaps burning coals upon a man's head, which it would be ridiculous to do even to enemies.

The language of Scripture is divided four ways.[1317] Some things are said but do not exist; some things exist but are not said; some things are said and exist; some things are not said and do not exist. Examples of the first class include when God is said to have fallen asleep[1318] or to be angry[1319] or to turn his face aside,[1320] and countless other things of this kind, none of which truly applies to God; but what is hidden beneath these words does fit God. Examples of the second group include the fact that the Son is said to be *homoousios* with the Father,[1321] the Father to be unbegotten and ἄναρχος [without beginning], though none of these statements is made expressly in Holy Writ but are deduced from it through sound arguments. An example of the third group is Paul's calling Christ God and man,[1322] for this is true without the application of any trope. It is an example of the fourth kind if someone were to say that the three persons are three gods different in nature, or that the world had no beginning, which is neither written nor true in any tropological sense. Therefore, we necessarily abandon the words and

* * * * *

1316 Rom 12:20

1317 Erasmus takes this quadripartite scheme directly from Gregory of Nazianzus; see *Oration* 31 (*On the Holy Spirit*) in Nazianzus 133–4; Grégoire de Nazianze *Discours* 27–31 in SC 250 322–30.

1318 Ps 44:23 (Vulg 43:23), Ps 78:65 (Vulg 77:65); see also *Oration* 31.22 in Nazianzus 133–4.

1319 Eg Exod 32:11; Ps 6:1 (Vulg 6:2); Isa 5:25, 64:9

1320 Ps 13:1 (Vulg 12:1), Ps 44:24 (Vulg 43:24)

1321 *homoousios* 'of one (the same) substance' (Latin *consubstantialis*): Erasmus gives the Latin as *homusios* and refers here to the later Christological definition at the Council of Nicea (325) and the trinitarian definition at Constantinople (381): *omousion patri, hoc est eiusdem cum patre substantiae*. The Council of Nicea's *symbolum* declares Jesus Christ to be 'true God from true God' (*Deum verum de Deo vero*) and 'of one substance with the Father' (ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί; Latin *unius substantiae cum Patre*); see DS 125; Tanner I 5. The Council of Constantinople (381) affirmed the divinity of the Holy Spirit, who is worshipped and glorified together with the Father and the Son; see DS 150; Tanner I 24. See also *Modus orandi Deum* CWE 70 188.

1322 Paul does not expressly call 'Christ God and man,' though many passages suggest this; see eg Col 1:15–20, 1:27–8; 1 Tim 5:21; Rom 1:3–4; Phil 2:5–11. See also Grillmeier I 15–26.

have recourse to tropology in the case of things that belong to the first class; otherwise the letter kills.[1323]

But suppose the words 'Sixty are the queens, eighty the concubines, of the young girls there is no number,'[1324] which is sung in the mystical Song in praise of Solomon, were given as an example of what we put in third place – this would set a dangerous example if the text were understood literally and applied to Christian morals. Quite similar is what the bride says in the same Song to the companions of the groom, whom she invites into her garden, 'Eat, my friends, and drink and become intoxicated, dearest ones';[1325] again, at Jeremiah 25, 'Drink, become intoxicated, and vomit,'[1326] the meaning of Scripture is far different from the literal sense of the words. Some things of this sort are also found in the Gospels. The Lord commands us to turn the other cheek to someone who strikes us,[1327] behaviour that neither Paul nor the Lord himself displayed when struck a blow,[1328] and also to give our tunic to someone who wrongfully takes our cloak;[1329] but it is contrary to ethical behaviour to give a deliberate sinner an opportunity to commit a graver sin. In language of this sort there is hyperbole[1330] that deters us from taking revenge.

It should be noted that sometimes, even if the truth of the basic meaning[1331] is established and there is no absurdity in the words or anything else in conflict with sound teaching, the letter, nevertheless, kills if we stick to it. The blame lies with the altered nature of the times. Such would it be if someone were now to lay calves on an altar, which was once a religious obligation and would now be impiety, so also if we were to understand the types of the Law and the prophets' predictions about Christ's coming as though he has not yet come – this most dangerous error still grips the unfortunate Jews right up to the present day. A similar error is made by those who believe that events promised to occur in due time have already happened; this

* * * * *

1323 2 Cor 3:6
1324 Song of Sol 6:7
1325 Song of Sol 5:1
1326 Jer 25:27
1327 Matt 5:39; Luke 6:29
1328 Paul speaks often of having received punishments, but nowhere mentions turning the other cheek; see eg 2 Cor 11:23–4 and 2 Tim 3:11; nor do the gospel accounts of the passion speak of Jesus responding to his persecutors in this way.
1329 Matt 5:40
1330 For Erasmus' discussion of hyperbole, see 775–6, 828–34.
1331 'Basic meaning,' ie the literal sense

was the insanity of Phygelus and those of his flock,[1332] who said that the resurrection was already completed when Christ was raised with some saints who according to Matthew returned to life as Christ was dying,[1333] though the Lord says clearly at John 5 that all will be raised: 'The hour has come in which all who are in the tombs will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who have done good will go forward unto the resurrection of life, but those who have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment.'[1334] Paul teaches the same thing.[1335] Today too there are some gripped by a similar madness who aver that the Antichrist has come with the false prophets,[1336] while, contrary to these, others claim that Enoch and Elijah have come with their prophets.[1337] Though it is surer than sure that the end of the world will come one day, and no few indications have already preceded, yet I think those diviners are mad; but whatever the case, it is advisable for everyone to ready himself for the final day lest it find them unprepared when he comes.[1338]

Now, as to the fact that St Augustine wrote in his letter to Vincentius that it showed remarkable impudence for someone to try to prove the dogmas of the Catholic faith through allegory,[1339] this is to be understood with an exception that he did not omit, for he adds: unless he also has clear

* * * * *

1332 See 2 Tim 2:17–18. Here one senses the pressure Erasmus felt to complete *Ecclesiastes* quickly; he gives the name Phygelus, though the Vulgate gives Philetus, the Greek New Testament gives Φίλητος, as do Erasmus' own *Novum Testamentum* ASD VI-4 172 and *Paraphrasis in 2 Timotheum* CWE 44 47.

1333 See Matt 27:52–3: 'And the graves were opened: and many bodies of the saints that had slept arose, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, came into the holy city, and appeared to many.'

1334 John 5:28–9. Erasmus has made two small changes in this passage, which reads: 'Wonder not at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the graves shall hear the voice *of the Son of God*. And they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done [πράξαντες; Latin *egerunt*] evil unto the resurrection of judgment.' Erasmus uses the Vulgate reading 'of the Son of God' for the Greek 'his' (αὐτου) and omits 'have done.' The sense, however, is supplied in the translation here.

1335 See 1 Thess 4:13–17.

1336 Cf 1 John 4:1, 3 and Matt 24:24.

1337 For Enoch, see eg Gen 4:26 and 5:6–11; Ecclus 44:16; Heb 11:5; for Elijah, see eg 2 Kings (Vulg 4 Kings) 2:11 and Matt 17:10–12.

1338 Cf Matt 24:44: 'Wherefore you also be ready because you know not at what hour the Son of man will come.'

1339 Augustine Ep 93 (24) CSEL 34 470; WSA II-1 376–408: 'But apart from great impudence who tries to interpret something expressed in an allegory in his own favor, unless he also has perfectly clear testimonies that cast light on the obscure passage?' (392).

witnesses as a light to brighten the darkness. Hence it is not right to hold doubts about the types or allegories whose wrappings canonical Scripture has opened for us. For example, Christ revealed the meaning of the bronze serpent and[1340] what Jonah meant given up from the belly of the whale after three days;[1341] the evangelists showed what the Lord meant when he said, 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it,'[1342] likewise when he gave the command to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.[1343] In fact the Lord himself deigned to explain some parables.[1344] Just as Isaiah expounded the allegory about the vine that bore wild grapes instead of grapes,[1345] similarly Peter indicated that the Flood was a type of Christian baptism.[1346] Paul taught that the rock from which water flowed in the desert for the Hebrews had designated Christ;[1347] he also adapts the story of Sarah and Hagar to the Law and the gospel,[1348] and he taught that the veil with which Moses covered his face when he spoke to the people is a type of the Jews' blindness,[1349] which does not see the spiritual understanding of the Law; he revealed also that Isaac had borne a figure of Christ: 'He did not say "in the seeds" but "in one seed," which is Christ.'[1350] No one may hold doubts about these and similar examples because they have a witness from people whose authority is unquestionable. If Gregory had given this interpretation, it would not have been wrong either to doubt or even to disagree,[1351] nor could any of these have been proved effectively, since we would be uncertain whether the Holy Spirit had meant this; in fact, it is impossible for us to prove something with certainty through what is uncertain.

Some allegories become clear either of themselves or from the actual tenor of the language or from other passages of Scripture, such as the statement of John the Baptist at Matthew 3, 'For already the axe has been placed at the root of the tree.'[1352] Because 'Generation of vipers, who showed you

* * * * *

1340 John 3:14–15
1341 Jon 2:1–11; see Matt 12:40 and Luke 11:29–32.
1342 John 2:18–22; Matt 26:61; Mark 14:58
1343 Matt 16:6; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1–2
1344 See eg Matt 13:1–23 (parable of the sower); see also Matt 13:24–30 (wheat and the tares); Mark 4:1–20; Luke 8:4–15.
1345 Isa 5:1–8
1346 1 Pet 3:20–1
1347 1 Cor 10:4
1348 Gal 4:22–4
1349 Cf 2 Cor 3:13–16 (referring to Exod 34:33–5); see 939, 959, 962, and 1085 above for Erasmus' use of these biblical images.
1350 Gal 3:16
1351 Gregory = Gregory of Nazianzus; see 491 n119 above.
1352 Matt 3:10; Luke 3:9. See 791 above.

to flee from the wrath to come,'[1353] etc, and 'Do not begin to say, "We have Abraham as father, because God can raise up sons to Abraham from those stones"'[1354] came earlier, it is clear what the metaphor of the axe means, namely that if they did not repent in time, the Israelite people would be rejected beyond remedy on account of their stubborn refusal to believe, and the grace of the gospel promised to Abraham's descendants would be transferred to the gentiles that imitate Abraham's faith.

But the allegory of Psalm 79,[1355] 'You have transferred the vineyard from Egypt,' which is continuous right to the end of the Psalm, even though it is obscured by the combination of words 'from Egypt' and 'you have cast out the gentiles,' would nevertheless receive light from Isaiah 5,[1356] for there the prophet himself interprets his allegory: 'The vine of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel and the men of Judah his delightful plant.' But what he said about the vineyard, 'I waited for it to make grapes, and it made wild grapes,'[1357] he explains thus: 'I waited for it to give judgment, and behold, iniquity,'[1358] etc; likewise in chapter 3 where the Lord, expostulating with those who were corrupting the people of Israel with impious morals and oppressing them with violence, says, 'For you have fed upon my vineyard,'[1359] as he also says at Jeremiah 12, 'Many shepherds have demolished my vineyard.'[1360] But because the allegory of the vineyard is familiar among the priests, even the chief priests and the Pharisees understood that their own wickedness was being attacked in Jesus' parables about the hired men in the vineyard[1361] and about the tenant farmers of the vineyard who killed the son,[1362] and they were offended and sought to lay hands upon the Lord.

But the parable about the three, five, and ten talents is inherently clear, advising that each person should apply the ability given to him by God to the benefit of his neighbour until the time of judgment comes.[1363]

* * * * *

1353 Matt 3:7
1354 Matt 3:9
1355 Ps 80:8–19 (Vulg 79:9–20)
1356 Isa 5:7
1357 Isa 5:2
1358 Isa 5:7
1359 Isa 3:14
1360 Jer 12:10
1361 Matt 20:1–16
1362 Matt 21:33–46; Mark 12:1–12; Luke 20:9–19
1363 Matt 25:14–29. Erasmus has his numbers wrong; the man going into a far country gave out five, two, and one.

On the other hand, there are some of such obscurity that they cannot be explained clearly by any human intellect. There are many of this sort in the prophets but especially in Ezekiel, the riddles of the wheels at the start[1364] and the descriptions and dimensions of the temple from chapter 40 on.[1365] Therefore, if a controversy should occur, you would not find it possible to win your case from the dreadfully obscure or from the ambiguous. Something that is intended to refute an adversary or strengthen the doubtful ought to be clear, for if you present someone else's interpretation, he will say that it is a human invention; if you present your own, he will mock your fantasy and interpret the passage differently. Hence those who strive to assert sacramental confession from Christ's words, 'Go, show yourselves to the priest,'[1366] are wasting their time.[1367] According to the direct meaning it is obvious why Christ issued that command, namely to prove a miracle if the same priests by whom they had been judged should pronounce them to be clean;[1368] what they add is an allegory according to which the need to confess has been imposed only upon heretics, if we understand leprosy as heretical error.

Here perhaps it will occur to someone that, if this is true, many allegories are useless; for how are they advantageous if they prove nothing? But the truth is quite different. They have considerable value for rousing the weary, for consoling the downcast, for instilling courage in the wavering, for attracting the hypercritical; for the preacher does not always deal with heretics or the ungodly, who through their interpretation either reject or corrupt not only allegories but also the most evident testimony of the Scriptures, but those who are disposed to learn receive even the reasonings of pious men with favourable minds. In addition, though it is not agreed that the Holy Spirit meant what the interpreter of the allegory presents, nevertheless, it is not agreed that the Holy Spirit did *not* mean this; rather it is more likely that it did mean this so long as what is put forward is in agreement with the dogmas of sound faith and other passages of Scripture. Also, a pious mind should believe that a teacher approved by the sanctity of his

* * * * *

1364 Ezek 1:15–21

1365 Ezekiel 40–3

1366 Luke 17:14. Jesus says this to the ten lepers upon whom he had shown mercy; see Luke 17:11–19.

1367 See Erasmus' comments on this in *Exomologesis* CWE 67 4–5, 11, 14 n51.

1368 According to the Mosaic law, lepers who had been cleansed were required to show themselves to the priests; see Leviticus 13–14; see also Matt 8:1–4; Mark 1:40–5; Luke 5:12–15.

life has received his interpretation from a divine source, for the hand of the Lord is not shortened,[1369] nor is it absurd that the Holy Spirit also intended for Scripture sometimes to give rise to a variety of meanings according to each person's feeling, in the same way that manna had for each person the flavour that he desired; and this is not the uncertainty of Scripture but its fertility.

But Augustine in his work *De doctrina christiana* explains elegantly why God wanted Scripture to be covered and encased in such wrappings and obscurities.[1370] It was useful for the mysteries of heavenly philosophy to be veiled from the wicked, who would trample upon them as swine do upon pearls,[1371] but in such a way that access would be available to the pious and to those disposed to learn; it also assisted in rousing the somnolence of the human mind. We neglect what is at hand, 'the water jar in the doorway,'[1372] as the Greek proverb has it; we are more eager for what is hidden and remote. And just as that for which we have paid a higher price pleases us more, so that which we have achieved with effort is dearer to us than what has fallen to us spontaneously. In addition, just as many things shine more pleasingly through glass or amber, so truth that shines through an allegory delights us more.[1373] Finally, just as the sun's ray has more heat when reflected in a mirror or bronze pot, so whatever is imparted through an allegory affects our minds more powerfully than anything related plainly; the same frequently happens in paintings. The things that are said of Christ – that by his death he freed us from Satan's tyranny, from ignorance of the truth, from the slavery of sin[1374] – sink more deeply into our minds if an allegory about the Passover is applied, not to mention that they also assist the

* * * * *

1369 Isa 59:1

1370 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 2.6.7

1371 Matt 7:6. Cf *De doctrina christiana* 2.6.7; Augustine states it a bit differently: 'But many and varied obscurities and ambiguities deceive those who read casually, understanding one thing instead of another; indeed, in certain places they do not find anything to interpret erroneously, so obscurely are certain sayings covered with a most dense mist. I do not doubt that this situation was provided by God to conquer pride by work and to combat disdain in our minds, to which those things which are easily discovered seem frequently to become worthless.'

1372 For 'the water jar in the doorway,' see *Adagia* II i 65 *In foribus urceum* 'The water jar on the doorstep.'

1373 See *Ratio* 262:1–3: *quae gratius per chrystallum aut sucinum pelluceant, quam si nuda conspiciantur*.

1374 See Romans 5–8; and *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 32–52.

memory; for those who profess the art of memory use specific images to fix in the mind what they do not want lost through forgetfulness,[1375] but it is much more correct to use signs of this sort to imprint in our minds what we should not forget. It is a prophet's way to adumbrate something through a sign before it is related openly; this contributes both to trustworthiness and to the listeners' disposition to be taught. Thus the figures of the Old Testament and the riddles of the oracles contribute credibility to the gospel. Finally, the extremely perspicacious Gregory of Nazianzus demonstrates in the fifth book of his *Theologia*[1376] that in heavenly philosophy the most beneficial method of teaching is if the highest things are not revealed immediately, but instead the listeners are led towards complete knowledge through certain stages. Thus the Old Testament used types and allegories as rudimentary lessons to prepare the world for the light of the gospel; thus Christ himself revealed those sublime things to his followers gradually, not immediately, but he prepared them with parables and ambiguous sayings and marvellous deeds, and trained the minds of his disciples gradually so that they first believed him to be a good man, then a prophet, next suspected something in him more sublime than the rank of prophet, finally recognized in him a power greater even than man – but all of this as though in dreams until that fiery Spirit came, which shook away sleep and led into the whole truth.[1377]

Nor are allegories completely useless even for the dogmas of the faith. Some are not convincing but add light and grace when applied to sound testimonies. Take as an example the passage in Ezekiel 37 about the dry bones that are gathered at the prophet's words and are put back each in its place by tightening the sinews, are then dressed in flesh, and finally draw breath, live again, and rise.[1378] The literal sense contains only a sign and an image of prophecy, nor does the first allegory designate the resurrection of bodies, which the Lord promised to us; rather it hints that a people scattered and

* * * * *

1375 On the art of memory, see: Quintilian 11.2.1–51; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.16.28–24.40; Cicero *De oratore* 2.86.350–88.361. See also Frances A. Yates *The Art of Memory* (Chicago 1966); Mary Carruthers *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* 2nd ed (Cambridge 2008); and *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* ed Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski (Philadelphia 2002).

1376 For 'fifth book of his *Theologia*,' see *Oration* 31.37 (*On the Holy Spirit*) in Nazianzus 138.

1377 Ie Pentecost; see Acts 2:3–4.

1378 Ezekiel 37

in despair and almost dead and buried will be gathered together and have a rest from affliction.[1379] The interpretation given of the prophecy shows by itself that this is true.[1380] Nor is this witness necessary to prove the resurrection, which is abundantly proved by other passages of Scripture; but if it is adduced, it adds no little grace and clarity, and it is not clear to us whether the Holy Spirit has commended a double allegory to us there.

A similar passage is Job 19, 'I know that my Redeemer lives and that on the very last day I shall arise from the earth and will be clothed again in my skin, and in my flesh I shall see God,'[1381] etc. It is generally agreed that this is said against the friends of Job who spoke as though Job had been afflicted by God because of his impiety, and there was no hope left of a better lot. Job, however, replied with a clear conscience that he had a sure hope that God, who sent the disaster, would redeem him from it and raise him up from lying in the dung heap and would restore his original health though disease and hunger had already eaten away his skin and flesh; and he would talk again with a loving God, who at the time seemed hostile, for his words 'on the very last day' mean 'before death.' Nevertheless, it would be impious to assert that the Holy Spirit did not signify to us there a true resurrection of bodies. By a similar trope, it was said in Psalm 26, 'I hope to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living'[1382] instead of 'in this life,' just as Hezekiah, despairing of his life, says, 'I will not see the Lord God in the land of the living.'[1383] The allegory does not provide a proof, but offers support, and it should not be rejected by the pious.

But the thoughtful preacher will exercise discrimination in applying allegories. Moreover, this is of various kinds. First, whenever the Doctors interpret the same allegory in a variety of ways, he will take the one that seems to come closest to the true meaning, but if he likes no one's invention, he will produce his own, though this should not be done rashly. Nor is it useful to adduce the differing interpretations of authorities before an uneducated crowd, since this reduces the credibility of the allegories as well as afflicting the audience with boredom. Nor is it necessary to examine every

* * * * *

1379 The first allegory is explained in Ezek 37:11–14; the possible second allegory is the resurrection of the dead, 'which God promised us'; see Matt 22:31–2; John 5:29.

1380 For the interpretation referred to, see Ezek 37:11.

1381 Job 19:25–6

1382 Ps 27:13 (Vulg 26:13)

1383 Isa 38:11

aspect of an allegory with minute care; this practice renders the sermon tedious. Rather only those should be mentioned that fit best and gain splendour in the treatment and are more likely to stir the emotions. For just as some words are added in expounding the oracles of the prophets, not to introduce some additional point but to make the narrative harmonious and connected, so in passages containing an allegory some things are added to connect the argument. Nor should one pursue an allegory further than the subject demands. Let the Lord himself and Paul be our example, both of whom touch upon allegories summarily. For instance, some, including Irenaeus, have reasoned from Christ's words, 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it,'[1384] that the Lord lived in the flesh for forty years because we read that the temple had been built in that many years. But the likeness should not have been taken that far; otherwise many other things associated with the temple would have to be related to Christ's body. It would be enough to understand the body of the Lord by the temple, his death by its destruction, and the resurrection by its erection within three days. I give this advice because some of the ancients indulged themselves excessively in this regard too,[1385] and Augustine's warning,[1386] in accordance with rhetorical precepts, that we should not tarry too long in the grand style of language and in stirring the more powerful emotions should also be observed in the explanation of allegories, which are to be sprinkled like seasonings and would easily become repugnant if served as foods. In explaining them the preacher will strive to avoid all boredom and flatness through the clarity and wit of his language as well as through the frequent interjection of brief and pithy statements, and finally by tropes that make the argument more plausible and attractive.

* * * * *

1384 John 2:19; see Irenaeus *Adversus haereses* 2.22.6 ANF I 392: 'For those who wish to convict Him of falsehood would certainly not extend the number of His years far beyond the age which they saw He had attained; but they mentioned a period near His real age, whether they had truly ascertained this out of the entry in the public register, or simply made a conjecture from what they observed that He was above forty years old, and that He certainly was not one of only thirty years of age . . .' John 2:20 states, 'The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?"' (NRSV).

1385 Earlier Erasmus names them: Origen, Ambrose, Hilary of Poitiers, and Jerome; see 835 and 917.

1386 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.22.51: 'For when one style is maintained too long, it loses the listener . . . if the grand style must be used for a protracted time, it should not be used alone, but should be varied by the intermingling of other styles.'

Now, among the kinds of allegory, the ones that should be applied more often are those that are further from the risk of tedium, among which is tropology, which we discussed earlier.[1387] Origen and those who have trained in imitation of him philosophize freely about the letter and the spirit, about the church assembled from the gentiles and from the Synagogue; but this sort of allegory was more appropriate in the beginnings of the church when conflict was still seething between the gospel and the Mosaic law, between Jews and Christians, and not a few were dragged back into Judaism from the grace of the gospel. Yet there is no lack these days of Jews who attack Christ with abuse in their synagogues though he should be glorified above all things; but our dispute is not with them. Christian gentleness tolerates this stubborn race of men in the hope that they would recover their senses, something that Paul predicted would one day occur.[1388] Of course it is through Paul's kindness that remnants of that race still survive; if only God would open the eyes of their heart so that they might acknowledge together with us the true Messiah, God and man, apart from whom there is no true salvation.[1389]

We showed above how much advantage there is in using the procedure that more recent authorities call tropology.[1390] St Hilary does not touch upon it, but he follows Origen, I think, and interprets the city of the Gerasenes,[1391] from which the Lord is asked to depart, as the Jewish people that rejects the grace of the gospel, and the city of Christ to which he travels back[1392] as the people of the faithful, which is the church.[1393] He wants the paralytic who is healed through faith in Christ and freed from all his sins to be a type of the whole human race, noting also that the paralytic was not told, 'Be healed'; what he is told is 'Be steadfast,'[1394] since in Greek it is θάρσει, which is the precise equivalent of Latin *confide* [be confident] or *bono animo esto* [be of good cheer]. Then he even subverts the letter, and too much in the manner of Origen at that, to make room for an allegory, saying, 'We do not read that the paralytic had committed any sin.' And he confirms this forced sentiment with some hardly appropriate evidence, adducing the man born blind

* * * * *

1387 See 933–4 above.
1388 Rom 11:23–32; see *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42:63–9, especially 66.
1389 Cf Acts 4:12.
1390 For 'more recent authorities,' see 932–4 above.
1391 Matt 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:37
1392 Capharnum is understood.
1393 See Hilary of Poitiers *In Matthaeum* SC 254 194–9; PL 9 959–60.
1394 Matt 9:2

of whom the Lord pronounces that neither he nor his parents had deserved by their sins that he should be born blind;[1395] but it does not immediately follow that those on whom disaster has not been inflicted for their sins are wholly free of sin. In addition, though it is certain that the blind man was free of sins, it does not follow directly that the paralytic was also free of sins; in fact, it is surer than sure that the paralytic had no lack of sins – otherwise Christ's words, 'Your sins are forgiven,'[1396] would be pointless according to their literal meaning. 'For we have not heard that the paralytic committed any sin,'[1397] he says: but if someone is told, 'Your sins are forgiven,' is this not a clear statement that he sinned? He correctly noted that what the Law could not undo was remitted by Christ through faith, and adds, 'For faith alone justifies';[1398] and yet this statement, which is heard with reverence in Hilary, has been subjected to a long clamorous outcry in our age.[1399] Furthermore, he interprets the Lord's words to the paralytic, 'Go away into your house,'[1400] as the Paradise from which Adam was expelled, access to which was again opened to man through the gospel.[1401] It is not indeed foolish to say these things, but everyone sees how much harsher they are and less probable than what we pointed out above concerning tropology, together with the fact that it was more appropriate to say them in the beginnings of the church.

Now, just as it matters what type of allegory you choose for yourself as well as how suitable are the methods by which you treat it, the source from which you take the foundations of your allegories also is not unimportant. I think that I can give the same advice on this subject as about scriptural proof texts, that they should be chosen particularly from those books whose authority has never been in doubt, whether among the Hebrews, the Greeks, or the Latins. To this group belong Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the four books of Kings, the two of Chronicles and the same number of Ezra, and Esther, Job, Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, the twelve prophets; these in the Old Testament. In the New, however, they are the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles,

* * * * *

1395 John 9, especially 9:2–3
1396 Matt 9:2; Luke 5:20
1397 Hilary *In Matthaeum* 8:5 SC 254 198–201
1398 Cf Rom 4:5, 5:1; see Hilary of Poitiers *In Matthaeum* 21.15 SC 258 140–1: *quia fides sola iustificat*.
1399 Erasmus is no doubt alluding to Martin Luther and the central theological issue of the Reformation, justification by faith alone (*sola fides*).
1400 Matt 9:6
1401 Hilary of Poitiers *In Matthaeum* 8.6 SC 254 200–1, 21.15 SC 258 140–1.

all the Epistles of Paul except the one to the Hebrews, 1 Peter, and 1 John; not that I want to take away the authority of the others, but these have special authority.[1402] Some extremely naive persons try to make the authority of all equal and strive to convince us that even the third and fourth books of Ezra, whose fantasies Jerome scorns,[1403] were written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that the book titled Wisdom, which many believe is by Philo, was written by Solomon, though not even the style is appropriate and the subject itself makes it clear enough that this work was written after the time of Christ. Someone will think these things a matter of courtesy, but such courtesy reduces the weight of canonical Scripture rather than strengthening it; for the founders of the church had good reason to reject the apocrypha or at least to set them apart.

There is always somewhere a place for tropology (to use these words for the time being for the sake of our exposition), but it is not equally felicitous to introduce allegory and anagogy in all the books of Scripture. They have greater appeal in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; not so in Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, and Esther unless you were to be quite selective, for David and Solomon bear a type of Christ in certain respects; nevertheless, there should be some selectivity in the earlier books, for not everything has a mystical meaning, and some things fall flat when treated through allegory or anagogy. Nevertheless, there has been no shortage of men who have turned everything to a spiritual meaning; among them is Augustine and, more recently, Eucherius[1404] and some

* * * * *

1402 Erasmus does not include Tobias, Judith, Maccabees, James, 2 Peter, 2 & 3 John, Jude, and Revelation, which are given authority in the decree of Damasus (DS 179), except 3 John (which was included later as canonical; see DS n180), and in Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 2.8.13. Here, however, Erasmus is not making a judgment on the authority or canonicity of the books he omits. His point is that the works he mentions here have 'special authority' (*praecipua autoritas*), as he explains below. The Council of Trent would define the canonical books in Session 4 on 8 April 1546, affirming the traditional canon; see DS 1502–3; and Tanner II 663–4.

1403 See Jerome's comment on these books in his preface to the book of Ezra, *Praefatio Hieronymi in Ezram* PL 28 (1845) 1403B: 'Nec quemquam moveat quod unus a nobis editus liber est: nec apocryphorum tertii et quarti delectetur; quia et apud Hebraeos Ezrae Neemiaeque sermones in unum volumen coarctantur: et quae non habentur apud illos, nec de viginti quatuor senibus sunt, procul abiicienda.' The Council of Trent considered as canonical only 'Ezra I and II (which is also named Nehemiah)'; see Tanner II 663.

1404 Eucherius (saint), bishop of Lyons (d c 450); see ODCC 570. Eucherius composed two exegetical works, *Formularum spiritualis intelligentiae ad Veranium*

others. But to offer an example, there are some who twist the ugly but fertile Leah and the beautiful but barren Rachel at Genesis 30 to an allegory;[1405] Augustine even does the same with what is said in the same chapter about the night bought with mandrakes,[1406] as though the passage had insufficient dignity or value without an allegory.[1407] I think otherwise.

The first thing that should be noted here is the dispensation of divine goodness, which makes everyone equal with different endowments. To Rachel he gave beauty to commend her to her husband, to Leah fertility up to a fourth offspring so that she now equalled her sister in favour. He consoled the gloomy Leah; to the beautiful Rachel he added barrenness to prevent her becoming too overbearing towards her sister. The great effort with which the wives strive to please their men, not with potions or the allurements of paint but by giving birth, is also a mark of a fine moral character; the command, 'Grow and multiply and fill the earth,'[1408] was still valid. Rachel envied her sister. But what did she envy? Not the pleasure

* * * * *

liber unus and *Instructiones ad Salonium*; a passion of the Theban legion, *Passio Agaunensium martyrum*, and two ascetical works, *De laude heremi* and *De contemptu mundi*. See CSEL 31. Allen gives the date of 1517 for Erasmus' preface to the *Epistola . . . Eucherii episcopi Lugdunensis, ad Valerianum propinquum de philosophia christiana* (printed at the end of Martens' edition of Cato of 1517); see Ep 676 to Alaard of Amsterdam, Louvain, 1517. Eucherius' works were published at Paris in 1528, with further editions at Basel in 1531 and 1533; the Basel editions contain Erasmus' 1517 preface. For Erasmus' use of Eucherius, see Erika Rummel 'Quoting Poetry instead of Scripture: Erasmus and Eucherius on *contemptus mundi*' *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et Renaissance* 45 (1983) 503–9.

1405 Gen 30:1–24; see 527 above for Erasmus' comments on this passage.

1406 Mandrakes were considered to be aphrodisiacs in the ancient world. See Gen 30:14–16 and JBC I 30:110.

1407 See Augustine *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* (*Reply to Faustus the Manichaean*) PL 42 (1865) 435–6; NPNF 1st series 4 293–4. Augustine's allegorical reading emphasizes the virtue of the active life; the mandrake 'fruit represents a good character; not the praise given a man by a few just and wise people, but popular report, which bestows greatness and renown on a man, and which is not desirable for its own sake, but is essential to the success of good men in their endeavors to benefit their fellow-men.' He reads into this 'all the useful result of a laborious life exposed to the common vicissitudes; a life which many avoid on account of its troublesome engagements, because, although they might be able to take the lead, they are bent on study, and devote all their powers to the quiet pursuit of knowledge, in love with the beauty of Rachel' (294).

1408 Gen 1:28

of intercourse but fertility. Moreover, such was their love of offspring that each submitted her maidservant in intercourse with her husband before they themselves could conceive,[1409] as we read Sarah did as well,[1410] with quite different motives from those felt today by certain women who use drugs to induce barrenness so that they do not undergo the trouble of giving birth or of breastfeeding or see their beauty wither – to say nothing of the accursed wickedness of certain women who kill an already living fetus in the womb or expel it with drugs. It should also be noted that they thank God for each birth, since of course they understand that both barrenness and fertility are sent by divine will.

It would also be overly pointless to twist what is said there about the multicoloured sticks into an allegory.[1411] Is there no profit then except the pleasure of the story? There *is* something pertinent to morals. It shows outstanding faith that Jacob for so many years served a man neither trustworthy nor agreeable, in such a way that Laban himself admitted that he had been enriched by Jacob's faithful service.[1412] But the aim of this most gentle of men is to get away from a difficult and exacting father-in-law without a quarrel and with full consent. 'Give me my wives and children, that I may look out for my house,'[1413] he says; he asks no compensation except wife and children. The man, though usually intransigent, is moved by such modesty; he readily offers compensation, but Jacob, in order not to be troublesome in any regard, asks in return for his past and future servitude only that anything of varied colour subsequently born in the flocks should belong to him, anything of a single colour to his father-in-law. Laban eagerly accepted this condition as very fair, knowing that variety of colour is rare in sheep. Here indeed Jacob's trust in God is clear, for it is not natural for sheep of varied colour to be born from having sticks of various colours put in front of them. It requires considerable effort to depart from dealings with the wicked without a quarrel. You see a special moral lesson lurking in a passage that seemed pointless and, I almost said, ridiculous. Let this single example stand in place of many. Let the preacher refrain from allegories and anagogies when he runs across passages of this sort, or else touch upon them summarily, briefly, and in passing if he thinks that they should be applied. He should handle tropology with special care.

* * * * *

1409 Gen 30:3–13
1410 Gen 16:1–5
1411 Gen 30:32–43
1412 Gen 30:27
1413 Gen 30:26

It would not be inappropriate, out of consideration for certain rather inexperienced persons, to go further and state that nothing prevents one thing from being a type of several things or the same words having different allegories. For example, the manna that flowed for the Hebrews in the desert[1414] contains a figure of the words of the gospel on which the souls of the pious feed, and it can also contain a type of the Lord's body and blood in the Eucharist, as the Lord himself reveals at John 6;[1415] and this same Jerusalem sometimes is a type of the Church Militant upon earth, sometimes of the Church Triumphant in heaven. Likewise Goliath's overthrow by David[1416] is a type of Christ casting down Satan's tyranny and of man fighting against the flesh with the help of the spirit.

Sometimes one type is a step to another; for example, the bronze serpent fixed upon the pole prefigured Christ's crucifixion;[1417] and again, Christ raised upon the cross advises us to be carried away from the love of earthly things and to be borne aloft in the spirit and to die to the world and to the flesh. The same can be said about all the things that the Lord did on earth, which are adumbrated in figures in the Old Testament and are types for us of what we ought to do. So much for figures.

The following is an example of an allegory. At Deuteronomy 22, Moses forbids anyone to plow with an ox and an ass.[1418] The meaning can be allegorical, that we are not to combine Judaism with Christianity, for they do not agree; as Paul declares, 'If you are circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.'[1419] It can also be that you are not to profess yourself a Christian in such a way that you worship both the world and God at the same time, or this: do not simultaneously both profess theology and be devoted with equal zeal to secular philosophy. I will not burden the reader with a host of examples, for he will easily work out others from this one.

Sometimes it happens that allegories seem different though they are not. For instance, Origen interprets the husks of the swine with which the prodigal son wanted to fill his belly as the songs of poets;[1420] someone else

* * * * *

1414 Exodus 16
1415 John 6:59
1416 1 Samuel 17
1417 For Erasmus' words on this, see 952 and 959 above.
1418 Deut 22:10. See 582 above.
1419 Gal 5:2; see also *Paraphrasis in Galatas* CWE 42 121–3.
1420 Cf Luke 15:16; see Origen *Fragments on Luke* (216. Luke 15.16) in *Homilies on Luke, Fragments on Luke* FOC 94 214; Origen's homilies on Luke and extant fragments can be found in Origen *Die Homilien zu Lukas in der Übersetzung des Hieronymus und die griechischen Reste der Homilien und des Lukas-Kommentars*

will interpret them as Platonic or Aristotelian philosophy, another as the honours or wealth or delights of this world, and these are not different meanings but examples of the same kind. Only God, who is the highest good, truly satisfies a man's mind; if you fall away from him, whatever it is in which you want to find rest is husks for swine. Finally, it is too well known to need pointing out that there can be several types or several allegories of the same thing, as there are of similitudes also.

I think that I have discoursed sufficiently about tropes and allegories, and I will pass to other topics once I have added the advice of St Augustine, that in explaining the obscurities of the Scriptures a preacher's words should be clear.[1421] It was expedient, for the reasons I have already mentioned, that canonical Scripture be covered occasionally in wrappings. But the same is not true for an interpreter of the Scriptures: that which is intended to dispel the darkness must be light. Perhaps my offering this advice could seem pointless if I did not see certain men aim at a prophetic style in their explications so that one needs a second interpreter to understand their enigmas.

Some boldly assert that there is no obscurity in the canonical books so long as one has skill in the language and common sense.[1422] I certainly favour the opinion of these persons to the extent that I wish it were entirely true, but all the Doctors of the church protest with a single voice, and among them some who have lacked neither skill in languages nor common sense. Moreover, obscurity arises from many other causes besides tropes; it would not be inappropriate to mention these here summarily and at the same time to show the means by which the difficulties can be resolved, even though we have made scattered references to these earlier; and Augustine, that most vigilant Doctor of the church, has much to teach us in *De doctrina christiana*.

* * * * *

Origenes Werke 9, ed Max Rauer GCS 49 (Berlin 1959, 1st ed 1931); see *Paraphrasis in Lucam* 11–24 CWE 48 78–9 and n24; see also Jerome Ep 21:13 (to Damasus): 'We may also interpret the husks in another fashion. The food of the demons is the songs of poets, secular wisdom, the display of rhetorical language . . .' See also Augustine *Confessions* 3.6; and *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.33 CCSL 44B 74.

1421 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 4.8.22–5

1422 Chomarat (ASD V-5 261 376–7n) detects an allusion to Luther and directs the reader to *Hyperaspistes* 1.64–71 CWE 76 129–35; see also ibidem table B 316–17; LB X 1299A–1313B. For a discussion of the reasons for obscurity in Scripture, see also Chomarat *Grammaire* I 544–6.

But to begin from the lowest.[1423] Sometimes the reader's understanding is impeded by a manuscript corrupted through the fault of scribes or perverters,[1424] as happened to St Augustine in some passages (the remedy for this difficulty is to consult copies that are more correct). Sometimes a Greek or Latin translator may have given an incorrect or obscure or ambiguous rendering of what he is translating. This difficulty can be remedied in four ways: if you consult the sources themselves, Hebrew or Chaldean in the Old Testament, Greek in the New; or examine the interpretations of the ancients, from which the true reading can be detected; or compare different versions (for it often happens that one translates with clarity what another renders obscurely or ambiguously); or go finally to the commentaries of those who have devoted their energies to removing such difficulties. In addition, though the hard work of the ancients has brought no little assistance to scholars of sacred philosophy, nevertheless the labour of restorers will always be needed because the wickedness of interpolators never ceases and the yawning of scribes never ceases. Indeed we too, along with others, have striven with all our power in this regard; if only we had been able to accomplish all that we wanted! For how many centuries have they sung in churches from Psalm 41, 'So my soul longs for God, the living source'[1425] instead of 'the strong living God,'[1426] as the Septuagint translated it and the original Hebrew has it. Augustine does not comment on this phrase; he calls God 'strong' and 'living' to distinguish him from those dead images that cannot confer salvation upon a man and free him from evils.[1427] For

* * * * *

1423 For difficulties in working with Scripture (for Jerome) and the obscurity of Scripture, see: *Ratio* 182:30–183:14; and Ep 337 to Maarten van Dorp.

1424 With 'perverters,' presumably Erasmus means anyone foolishly changing a text by bad corrections, interpolations, excisions, etc.

1425 Ps 42:2–3 (Vulg 41:2–3)

1426 The Latin involves a difference of only one letter, *fontem* 'source' as opposed to *fortem* 'strong.' (Translator's note)

1427 Augustine *Enarrationes in psalmos* Psalm 41 CCSL 38 459–62; *Exposition of Psalm 41* WSA III-16 241–4. Psalm 41:2–3 in both the LXX and according to the Hebrew give similar readings: 'Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum ita desiderat anima mea ad te Deus sitivit anima mea ad Deum *fortem*: *vivum* [strong: living]' (LXX); 'Sicut areola praeparata ad inrigationes aquarum sic anima mea praeparata est ad te Deus sivit anima mea Deum *fortem viventem* [strong living]' (Iuxta Hebr.). Augustine's text had the shorter reading: *Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus*; *fortis* and *vivus* do not appear in his quotation of verses 2 and 3. In his exposition of the passage Augustine does not use the word *fortis* but does use

how many centuries have they been reading publicly and privately from the Epistle to the Hebrews, 'By faith some have pleased [*placuerunt*] angels who were received hospitably' instead of 'some were unaware [*latuerunt*] that it was angels who were received hospitably.'[1428] A scribe corrupted the true reading, not recognizing an idiom of the Greek language, and there are countless things of this kind.

Sometimes difficulty arises from idioms of the languages. For each and every language has its own particular forms of expression; if you transfer these into another language, they are not understood by those who know only the second language. For example, Hebrew uses the repetition of a word to indicate ἐπίτασις [intensity], such as when they say, 'Good good figs' for 'extremely good' and 'Bad bad figs' for 'extremely bad,' and Greek says, 'I know you gratitude' instead of 'I bear you gratitude,' 'He was unnoticed having spoken against himself' instead of 'He spoke against himself unknowingly.' It was, I say, because he did not recognize this form of speech that someone corrupted the passage in Paul, 'They entertained angels who were received in hospitality.' The Latin language also has its idioms, which cause difficulty to those who have only a slight sprinkling of it. The Septuagint had left a good deal of Hebraic colour in their version, part of which Augustine explained in his books of *Locutiones*,[1429] but Jerome in his edition did such a thorough job of removing that foreign element that there is almost more Hebrew idiom in the Greek New Testament than in the Old.[1430]

The same remedy applies against ambiguity in a word or in syntax. At 1 Corinthians 15, Paul swears by his own glory: 'By your glory I die daily.'[1431] But this preposition is ambiguous in Latin, so that someone who knew only Latin would be uncertain whether that glory was the reason why

* * * * *

the word *vivus* (463:15–16: *Sitivit anima mea ad Deum vivum*). For more on the textual problem Erasmus points out, see ASD V-5 261–2 and 402–3n, 404n.

1428 The reference to the story about 'entertaining angels unawares' is from Genesis 18, which lies behind this passage and is commented upon above when dealing with the tropological interpretation of Scripture; see 934–9.

1429 *In Heptateuchum locutionum libri VII* CCSL 33 381–465

1430 Jerome translated a number of books of the Bible from Hebrew into Latin and revised the Psalter and the Gospel. His translations would become part of what later came to be known as the Vulgate. See 'Vulgate' ODCC 1710–11; E.F. Sutcliffe 'Jerome' in *The Cambridge History of the Bible* ed G.W.M. Lampe (Cambridge 1969) II 80–101; J.N.D. Kelly *Jerome* (New York 1975) 141–67; Stefan Rebenich *Jerome* (London 2002) 52–9; and CWE 61 (Patristic Scholarship: The Edition of St Jerome).

1431 1 Cor 15:31. See *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* ASD VI-8 294–6.

Paul was dying every day or whether he was swearing by that glory,[1432] but the Greek word νή [by] is not ambiguous and is used only by someone swearing an oath. Hence in the Latin versions they have turned 'by' into 'because of,'[1433] and in some Greek manuscripts διά [through] is found instead of νή,[1434] which could have happened for two reasons: either because someone corrected a Greek manuscript in accordance with our own corrupted reading (which has probably happened in many passages), or because many Greeks shunned swearing, which Christ so carefully prohibited,[1435] and contend that Paul never swore.

Some bristle at the Son of God according to his divine nature being called *creatura* [creature][1436] since what did not exist before is said in Latin to be *creari* [created]; but Athanasius does not bristle at it,[1437] nor Gregory of Nazianzus[1438] and Jerome,[1439] so long as we interpret the word *creatura* [creature] as they interpret it according to the Greek word. In Greek κτᾶσθαι [to be created] is an ambiguous word, as is κτίσις [creature] as well, for it is not only what is begun or founded that is said to κτᾶσθαι but also what is obtained for some purpose, hence κτῆμα 'possession,'[1440] not because the possessor has created a slave or a house but because he has *obtained* it for his use; hence Tertullian, with his knowledge of Greek, generally calls a κτίσις not a 'creature' but a *paratura* [preparation].[1441] But to say that what is

* * * * *

1432 The Latin has *per*, which can be used, as Erasmus says, to indicate 'by means of' or as the equivalent of 'by' in an English oath. (Translator's note)

1433 Ie *per* has been replaced with *propter* in some Latin versions. (Translator's note)

1434 διά is the Greek preposition corresponding to *per* in the sense of 'through' or 'by means of.'

1435 Matt 5:34–7

1436 Col 1:15: 'He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.'

1437 See eg Athanasius *Contra gentes* 41 NPNF 2nd series 4 26.

1438 See eg Nazianzus *Oration* 30.2 (*Theological Oration 4, On the Son*) 93–4.

1439 Erasmus is correct. The translator of the Greek New Testament for the Vulgate edition rendered the Greek word κτίσις as 'creature' in Col 1:15 (Greek ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως; Latin *qui est imago Dei invisibilis primogenitus omnis creaturae*.

1440 The Greek word κτῆμα 'possession' was often used of slaves, as of other property or possessions. It derives from the verb κτάομαι 'to procure for oneself,' 'get,' 'acquire,' etc. See LSJ 1002 (κτῆμα and κτάομαι).

1441 Tertullian uses 'preparation' (*paratura*) frequently; see eg *Apologeticum* 22.10: 'From dwelling in the air, and their nearness to the stars, and their commerce with the clouds, they have means of knowing the preparatory processes [*paraturas*] going on in these upper regions, and thus can give promise of the rains which they already feel'; see also 27.4: *Ille scilicet spiritus daemonicae et angelicae paraturae* . . .; and 47.9: 'Ex horum semine etiam nostram hanc noviciolam

without beginning has been 'prepared' is no less ridiculous than that it was predestined; furthermore, the Son was predestined from eternity to assume human form and redeem the world. Therefore, there is no cause for us to be offended when we read of wisdom at Ecclesiasticus 24, 'And he who created me rested in my tent,' and then, 'From the beginning and before the ages I was created,'[1442] etc, likewise at Proverbs 8, 'The Lord possessed me from the beginning of his ways.'[1443] What he had translated there as 'created' he here translates as 'possessed'; in Greek it is the same word, ἔκτισεν.[1444]

Sometimes ignorance about antiquity obscures understanding inasmuch as the long passage of time makes many things new in human affairs. For example, no one would have understood Horace's words, 'The writer will praise your play with both thumbs,'[1445] if the ancients had not observed that it was once the custom for those who favoured to lower the thumb. Likewise, 'Against me they spoke who were sitting in the gate,'[1446] which is in Psalm 68, will be less clear in the literal sense if we are not advised that it was once the custom for the Jews to pronounce judgments in the gates of cities; the evidence is that at Deuteronomy 21 a father is ordered to take his rebellious son to the elders of that city and to the gate of judgment.[1447] In addition, at 2 Kings 14 Absalom stands in the entrance of the gate and invites those entering and leaving to bring their cases to him.[1448] Likewise, hardly anyone would have understood the Lord criticizing the Pharisees for their broad fringes and phylacteries if the scholars of antiquity had not pointed out that the Pharisees took this custom from Deuteronomy 6, 'You will bind them upon your hand, and they will be unmoving before your eyes.'[1449]

* * * * *

paraturam viri quidam suis opinionibus ad philosophicas sententias adulteraverunt et de una via obliquos multos et inexplicabiles tramites exciderunt.' *Paratura* = 'a preparing, preparation'; see *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (online edition).

1442 Ecclus 24:12, 14

1443 Prov 8:22

1444 The Vulgate version has two different translations of the same Greek word of the Septuagint: Ecclus 24:14 (Vulg; LXX 24:9) and Prov 8:22 both have the Greek ἔκτισέν με. See 841 and 921 above for Prov 8:22.

1445 Horace *Epistles* 1.18.66; Erasmus gives 'writer' (*scriptor*); the Oxford Classical Text 'patron' or 'promoter' (*fautor*). See *Adagia* I viii 46 *Premere pollicem. Convertere pollicem* 'Thumbs down. Thumbs up.' Here is meant 'whole-hearted support.'

1446 Ps 69:12 (Vulg 68:13)

1447 Deut 21:18–21

1448 2 Sam 15:2. Erasmus mistakenly gives the passage as 2 Samuel 14.

1449 Matt 23:5 and Deut 6:3–9; see *Annotationes in Matthaeum* 23.5 ASD VI-5 298–300.

Sometimes a word with different meanings, or at least used in different ways, creates ambiguity. There are many examples of the former in Hebrew, words that signify different things with the same letters and the same diacritical marks, others that have different meanings when the letters are the same but the marks are changed. In Greek τέλος means 'end' and 'tax,' whence those who collect taxes are called *telonae*.[1450] There is a celebrated aphorism of Euripides, Ἀκαλίνων στομάτων / Τὸ τέλος δυστυχία,[1451] which some men of learning have translated, 'The yield on an unbridled mouth is misfortune';[1452] but in my own opinion they would have been more correct to translate it, 'The tax of an unbridled mouth is misfortune,' so that 'tax' has the same meaning as 'fruit.' In Latin *os* has one meaning when the genitive case is *oris* and another when it is *ossis*,[1453] except that according to grammarians the pronunciation itself shows the difference:[1454] if you lengthen *os* [mouth], it is the one from which *oris* is derived, but if you shorten it, it is the one from which *ossis* [bone] is derived. You will lengthen it if you pronounce it as though you were saying *os* with a double *o*; you will shorten it if you say it with a single *o*, as it is now commonly pronounced, for the distinction between long and short syllables has been almost totally eliminated except when the accent makes one. We have discussed this in our little work *De recta pronuntiatione*.[1455]

Let the following be an example of the latter. In the Scriptures *consummatio* sometimes means 'completion,' such as the Lord on the cross *consummatum est* [It is finished],[1456] sometimes it means πανολεθρία, or 'total destruction,' such as at Isaiah 10, 'A shortened *consummatio* shall flood over righteousness,'[1457] and likewise at Jeremiah 4, 'The whole earth will be

* * * * *

1450 Cf Matt 9:10 and Luke 15:1. The Vulgate gives *publicani* for the Greek word τελῶναι: 'Behold many publicans and sinners came' (Matt); 'Now the publicans and sinners drew near unto him to hear him' (Luke).

1451 Euripides *The Bacchae* 386 and 388. See also Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 1.15.17; and *Lingua* CWE 29 271.

1452 The lines are 387 and 389 of Euripides' *The Bacchae*. This citation seems to have slipped Chomarat's mind when in writing his introduction to *Ecclesiastes* (ASD V-4 and 5) he said that the Greek tragedians are not cited (18); Erasmus has omitted the intervening line ἀνόμου τ' ἀφροσύνας (ie 'The end of an unbridled mouth *and of lawless folly* is misfortune'). (Translator's note)

1453 *os, oris* is Latin for 'mouth,' *os, ossis* for 'bone.' As Erasmus goes on to explain, *os* 'mouth' has a long *o*, *os* 'bone' has a short *o*. (Translator's note)

1454 See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.3.7.

1455 *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 347–475, especially 413

1456 John 19:30

1457 Isa 10:22

deserted, yet I shall not make a consummation,'[1458] that is, I shall not destroy everyone at once. Thus *spiritus* is sometimes put for 'breath,' sometimes for a person's emotion, sometimes for the Holy Spirit. The same view should be taken regarding many other words, among them *mundus* [world], *lex* [law], *caro* [flesh].[1459] Since examples are numerous, I dispense with them so as not to become too long-winded over something that is not obscure. I shall speak soon about the remedy.

There is a similar difficulty when either the same proper name is shared by several people or one person is designated by two or more names. An example of the former is: among the Egyptians there were many kings called Pharaoh, many called Ptolemy, among the Babylonians many called Nebuchadnezzar, among the Jews under the Babylonians many called Jeconiah,[1460] likewise in the Scriptures several called Darius, several Xerxes, several Antiochus, several Cyrus, and in the Gospel one reads of three or more Herods,[1461] different people with the same name. This circumstance engenders great confusion for the inattentive, even in secular history where there occur many men named Cato, many named Tarquin, many named Brutus, many named Scipio. The same thing happens in the names of places. Everyone knows that there are two Galilees, one of which is called 'Galilee of the heathen' to distinguish it.[1462] Similarly there are two Salems,[1463] one by the Jordan in the tribe of Ephraim (once the domain of the Sechemites, where John did his baptizing, as we read at John 3),[1464] the other, which is called by the better known name Jerusalem. The same difficulty is present in secular histories as well; Stephanus, who wrote about cities, provides a partial discussion.[1465]

* * * * *

1458 Jer 4:27

1459 Ie 'world,' 'law,' 'flesh'; see 898 and n1016 above

1460 See 1 Chron 3:17.

1461 Erasmus displays some confusion over the rulers named Herod who appear in the New Testament; see the extensive note on these rulers and Erasmus' difficulty in identifying them in *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 55 n32.

1462 For 'Galilee of the heathen,' see Isa 9:1. The word 'Galilee' means 'district' or 'circle' and designates only one place, ie the area of northern Palestine. The region itself is divided into northern Galilee, which is mountainous, and southern Galilee, which has rolling hills and plains and is rather fertile. Galilee was part of King Herod the Great's kingdom and part of the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas during Jesus' public life. Jesus himself is believed to be a Galilean from the village of Nazareth (cf Matt 13:53–8; Mark 6:1–6; Luke 4:16–30).

1463 See *Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land* ed Avraham Negev and Shimon Gibson (New York 2001) 446.

1464 John 3:23

1465 Stephanus of Byzantium (fl sixth c) wrote a geographical dictionary entitled

Here is an example of the latter. In the second book of Chronicles we find a king, Ochosias, with three names,[1466] since he is called Joachim, youngest of the sons of Jehoram, in chapter 21.[1467] The same man is then called Ochosias in the next chapter: 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem moreover set up Ochosias, his youngest son, as king in his place.'[1468] But in the previous chapter, when the names of Jehoram's sons are reported, he was called Azarias instead of Ochosias.[1469] Similarly, the man who is called Jechonias in the genealogy in Matthew is called Neri at Luke 3;[1470] the same man is called Joachim in Kings and Chronicles.[1471] Again, the man who is called Zorobabel in Luke is called Barachias at Nehemiah 3.[1472] Thus Matthew was called Levi,[1473] Paul Saul.[1474] In the case of places this is too obvious to require examples. But I shall not get deeper into the subject of homonyms and synonyms, since this subject has many bends and twists. Whoever has the desire and the time will be able to be informed more fully about these things from the books of Berosus,[1475]

* * * * *

Ἐθνικά, published by Aldus in 1502 with the title Περὶ πολέων 'On Cities.' The work, however, is a collection of fragments of Stephanus' work compiled by Hermolaus, who added an epitome. See *Stephani Byzantii Ethnica Volumen I:* A–Γ ed, trans, and ann Margarethe Billerbeck et al, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 43/1 (Berlin and New York 2006). See too Erasmus' brief remark about Stephanus in his letter to John Agricola (Freiburg, 3 May 1533), Allen Ep 2803:25–7.

1466 2 Chronicles (also known as 2 Paralipomenon)

1467 2 Chron 21:17

1468 2 Chron 22:1

1469 2 Chron 21:2

1470 Matt 1:11 and Luke 3:27

1471 2 Kings 24:6 (Vulg 4 Kings 24:6) and 2 Chron 36:8

1472 Luke 3:27 and Neh 3:4 (Nehemiah = Vulg 2 Ezra)

1473 See Matt 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27.

1474 Acts 13:9

1475 Berosus (or Berossus) of Babylon (third–second century BC) wrote a history of Babylon, Βαβυλωνιακά, from its origins to the death of Alexander the Great, which he dedicated to Antiochus I (324–261 BC). Important sections survive in Josephus and in Eusebius of Caesarea's *Chronicon* (expanded and translated by Jerome); see *Die Chronik des Hieronymus* Eusebius Werke 7, ed Rudolf Helm GCS 47, 2nd rev ed, 3rd ed with preface by Ursula Treu (Berlin 1984). See also 'Berosus' in *Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World, Antiquity* ed Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider; English ed Christine F. Salazar (Leiden; Boston 2002–10) 2:608–9. See also Walter E. Stephens *Giants in Those Days: Folklore, Ancient History, and Nationalism* (Lincoln, Nebr; London 1989); idem 'The Etruscans and the Ancient Theology in Annius of Viterbo' in *Umanesimo a Roma nel Quattrocento* ed Paolo Brezzi and Maristella de Panizza Lorch (Rome and New York [1984]) 309–22.

Philo,[1476] Josephus,[1477] and the various annotations of Jerome, especially the catalogues that he compiled concerning places,[1478] and from the commentaries of the more recent: Giovanni Nanni[1479] and Jan Driedo[1480] treated this part with some care. We are hurrying to the remaining subjects.

Sometimes ambiguity arises from differences in punctuation. For example, heretics used to punctuate 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was: this Word was in the beginning with God'[1481] so as not to be compelled to profess that the Word was God but only was with God. Again, those who wish to exclude the Holy Spirit from sharing in godhood punctuate 'Everything was made through him, and without

* * * * *

1476 Chomarat (ASD V-5 268 518n) notes that the list of Philo's works dealing with the Bible is in Eusebius *Historia ecclesiastica* (*Ecclesiastical History*) 2.18 NPNF 2nd series 1 119–21. He suggests that Erasmus might have in mind the *Onomasticon biblicon*, which is attributed to Philo; see *The Biblical Antiquities of Philo* trans M.R. James, prolegomenon by Louis H. Feldman (New York 1971).

1477 Erasmus' familiarity with Josephus' works in Greek seems to have been somewhat limited. Latin translations, however, were available of Josephus' *De bello Iudaico* and *Jewish Antiquities*. Platina had edited Rufinus' translation of *De bello Iudaico* (Rome: Arnoldus Pannartz, 25 November 1475), and the *Jewish Antiquities* was published at Augsburg in 1470 by Johann Schussler. In Ep 2091, to Piotr Tomicki, Erasmus expressed his disagreement with Jerome's placement of Josephus and others in his *Catalogue of Saintly Writers* (*Catalogus sanctorum* or *De viris inlustribus*), noting that their 'claims to saintliness were not very well established' (155–7); but see CWE 15 48 n25. In October 1534, Jean de Pins, bishop of Rieux, asked Erasmus to return the Greek copy of Josephus he had borrowed for the Froben press. See Allen Epp 2628 and 2969; for de Pins CEBR III 85–6 and Jean de Pins *Letters and Letter Fragments* (Geneva 2007) 319–26; Jerome *De situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum* in Eusebius Caesariensis *Das Onomastikon der biblischen Ortsnamen* Eusebius Werke 3/1, ed Erich Kostermann GCS 11/1 (Leipzig 1904).

1478 Jerome *De situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum* PL 23 (1845) 903–75

1479 Giovanni Nanni OP (c 1432–1502), also know as Johannes Annius of Viterbo, published his *Antiquitatum variarum volumina XVII* (Paris 1512). See 'Johannes Annius of Viterbo' CEBR I 60–1.

1480 Jan Driedo (d 1535), theologian at Louvain and opponent of Luther. See CEBR I 405–6. Johannes Driedo *De ecclesiasticis scripturis & dogmatibus libri IV* (Louvain: B. Gravius and R. Rescius 1533). Chomarat observes that he uses Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* to argue that it is not useful for a theologian to know languages and the ancient authors; ASD V-5 269 520–1. See Béné *Erasme* 428.

1481 John 1:1–2. Erasmus draws this example fom Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.2–3.

him was made nothing that was made'[1482] in order to make the Spirit something created. Similarly, in Romans 4, 'What then will we say Abraham our father according to the flesh found,'[1483] the phrase 'according to the flesh' can be referred to the word 'found' and can also be referred to 'our father.' Countless examples of this sort occur in the Scriptures. In explaining this kind of ambiguity, the method is the same as in the case of words that have many meanings or are used in a variety of ways. First of all, every statement that conflicts with the inviolable dogmas of the faith must be rejected, but if there is nothing opposed to sound teaching in the various meanings, the genuine reading is to be sought from the context itself: one must note what preceded the passage, what follows it, where the speaker began, what direction he has taken, and where he ended up. Here the comparison of other passages will also be of value; it often happens that the same meaning enunciated here in ambiguous words is expressed elsewhere in clear language.

In fact, delivery sometimes alters the meaning, for it makes a considerable difference whether your enunciation implies a statement, an interrogation, or an enquiry, though in 'From Nazareth can there be anything good?'[1484] the questioning is discerned not only from the language but also from the scribe's punctuation; but irony has no punctuation – it is

* * * * *

1482 John 1:3: 'All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men' RSV). Erasmus' *Novum Testamentum* constructs the Greek and Latin reading for the passage as: *πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἕν, ὃ γέγονεν. / Omnia per ipsum facta sunt: et sine eo factum est nihil, quod factum est*. The comma before the final two words of the phrase in the Greek text (*ὃ γέγονεν*) and the last three words of the Vulgate text (*quod factum est*) make clear that they modify the word *οὐδὲ ἕν* and *nihil* respectively. But many good Greek and Latin manuscripts lacked this punctuation, with the result that the words *ὃ γέγονεν* appear as the subject of what follows in the next verse, *ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν*, which would read: 'That which has been made was life in him.' Consequently, as Erasmus, points out, one could interpret verse 3 as excluding the Holy Spirit from the godhead. See *Annotationes in Joannem* (1.3) ASD VI-6 40–3 for his comments on the passage's punctuation and its implications for trinitarian theology; and *Novum Testamentum* ASD VI-2 13–14, especially 3n, which address Erasmus' reconstruction of the Greek reading of this passage.

1483 Rom 4:1; see *Annotationes in Romanos* CWE 56 105–6. The meaning of this passage is still uncertain, and scholarly interpretations vary. See Robert Jewett, assisted by Roy Kotansky *Romans:A Commentary* ed Eldon J. Epp (Minneapolis 2007) 304–24, especially 304–9, which reviews in depth the exegetical problem with this passage.

1484 John 1:46

distinguished by enunciation alone, as in 'Sleep now and rest.'[1485] But if the punctuation marks vary, the true reading is gathered partly from the actual meaning, partly from the tenor of the language. If you were to take 'Sleep now and rest' as having been said by someone who is giving a command, the meaning seems ridiculous. Again, at 1 Corinthians 6, 'Therefore if you have secular judgments, appoint for judging those who are contemptible in the church'[1486] is shown to have been said ironically by what follows next: 'I am speaking to your shame.' But we touched somewhat upon this earlier when we dealt with tropes, and we have produced not a few examples in our *Annotationes*.[1487]

I shall leave the subject of ambiguity after observing that the Hebrew and Greek languages contain more ambiguity than Latin. In Hebrew the fault lies partly with the similarity of certain characters, which provides the careless with an occasion for error, partly with the points that are marked under the letters (these were not applied in their ancient manuscripts, and yet a variation in meaning arises from altering them). In Greek, on the other hand, ambiguity arises from the fact that in their vocabulary the same sound often belongs to different voices or moods; for example, in what I have just cited from Paul, 'appoint for judging,' it is uncertain whether καθίστατε is 'you are appointing' in the indicative mood or 'appoint' in the imperative. Likewise at Colossians 2, 'Why are you still deciding,'[1488] it is uncertain whether δογματίζεσθε is taken as active or passive.[1489] But even in Latin one mood is often put for another through hypallage:[1490] 'You will not commit theft'[1491] represents a command, not a prediction. Let this single example stand for countless others. In fact, transferring an article to another place produces a different meaning.

The appearance of contradiction, triviality, or absurdity presents no mean difficulty to those who discuss the Scriptures, though it is surer than sure that there is nothing of the kind in the canonical books. When John writes, 'If we say that we do not have sin, we mislead ourselves and the

* * * * *

1485 Matt 26:45. See 505 n119 above.
1486 1 Cor 6:4. See 835 above. See *Annotationes in 1 ad Corinthios* 6:4 ASD VI-8 108–10.
1487 See n1486 above.
1488 Col 2:20
1489 The verb cannot be active; it would be more accurate to say 'middle' or 'passive.' (Translator's note)
1490 For 'hypallage,' see Cicero *Orator* 27.93; Quintilian 8.6.23. Erasmus discusses this rhetorical device at 890 above. See also Lausberg §685.2.
1491 Exod 20:15; cf Luke 18:20.

truth is not in us,'[1492] is this not in apparent conflict with what is found in the same Epistle, 'He who was born from God does not sin, but being begotten of God preserves him'?[1493] Again, Paul's words 'Men, cherish your wives as Christ cherished the church,'[1494] and Moses' command, 'Honour your father and mother,'[1495] seem contrary to what the Lord states in the Gospel at Luke 14, 'Whoever comes to me and does not hate his father and mother' etc 'cannot be my disciple.'[1496] Likewise, Christ's prohibition to the apostles, 'Do not go away into the path of the nations,'[1497] conflicts with what he says to the same men, 'Go into the entire world and teach all nations.'[1498] But this difficulty is easily removed through tropes and allegories, or at least by the distinction of times or persons:[1499] he said, 'Do not go away into the path of the nations' before his death; he said, 'Go into the world' after the resurrection. I refrain from more examples so as not to repel the reader.

An apparent triviality disturbs the reader whenever the same thing is related in different ways or the number of years does not fit the temporal reckoning. Mark 15 writes that Jesus was crucified at the third hour,[1500] though John 19 reports that Pilate sat before the tribunal at about the sixth hour;[1501] and it is not consistent to understand that he was crucified before he was condemned. Some also work up a sweat to show that the account given by Stephen in Acts 7[1502] fits with that in Genesis,[1503] and what Luke

* * * * *

1492 1 John 1:8; LB VI 1072B
1493 1 John 5:18
1494 Eph 5:25
1495 Exod 20:12
1496 Luke 14:26
1497 Matt 10:5
1498 Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15
1499 For 'distinction of times or persons,' see Quintilian 11.1 passim, where he sets forth precepts for decorum; see especially *Ratio* 196:29–198:32. Erasmus maintains that 'it greatly helps to understand the sense of Scripture if we weigh not only what is said but also by whom it is said, to whom it is said, with what words it is said, at what time, on what occasion, what precedes and what follows – for in fact one type of speech fits John the Baptist, another Christ. One thing is prescribed for the simple people, another for the apostles when they were still uneducated, another when they were formed and instructed' (196:29–35). See also Chomarat *Grammaire* I 582–4.
1500 Mark 15:25
1501 John 19:13–14
1502 Acts 7:16
1503 See Gen 49:29–30: 'And he charged them, saying: I am now going to be gathered to my people: bury me with my fathers in the double cave, which is in the field of Ephron the Hethite, over against Mambre in the land of Chanaan,

in chapter 9 reports about Saul's prostration[1504] seems to disagree with the account of Paul himself. This also occurs frequently in the gospel accounts. But a discrepancy looks like triviality because the language of truth is simple. Many things indeed were foretold about the Messiah in the Old Testament that never appeared in Christ, such as when the prophecy says, 'The mountain of the house of the Lord will be raised above all the hills'[1505] and 'He will sit upon the throne of David'[1506] etc, likewise when God is read to have laid upon his head a crown of precious stone and to have anointed him before his comrades,[1507] in addition about battles and victories over crushed enemies,[1508] and about the sword added to the thigh,[1509] when none of these was seen in Christ, rather everything just the opposite. This matter was a stumbling block not only to the Jews generally but even to the apostles themselves. Not even the things that Isaiah 11 predicted would occur ever happened at the advent of Christ: 'The calf and lion and sheep will tarry together, and a little boy shall lead them,'[1510] etc.

What we reported before about gouging out the eye and casting away the right hand contains an apparent absurdity, likewise about heaping coals upon the head of one's enemy,[1511] in addition 'One must be born again'[1512] and 'Unless you become like that little one,'[1513] etc, also 'Unless you eat

* * * * *

which Abraham bought together with the field of Ephron the Hethite for a possession to bury in' (DV). See also Stephen's speech before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:15–16): 'So Jacob went down into Egypt; and he died, and our fathers. And they were translated into Sichem, and were laid in the sepulchre, that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Hemor, the son of Sichem' (DV).

1504 Acts 9:1–8, 26:12–20; see *Annotationes in Lucam* 9:1–8 ASD VI-5 528; cf *Paraphrasis in acta* CWE 50 63–5, 141–4.

1505 Mic 4:1; Isa 2:2

1506 Cf Isa 6:1 and 1 Kings 22:19.

1507 'Crown of precious stone' (*coronam de lapide pretioso*): Ps 21:3 (Vulg 20:4); 'anointed' (*unxisse*): Ps 45:7 (Vulg 44:8 reads *unxit*).

1508 Cf Psalm 68 (Vulg 67).

1509 Ps 45:3 (Vulg 44:4)

1510 'The little boy shall lead them' (*puer parvulus minabit eos*); Erasmus is following Jerome's translation of Isa 11:6 (Vulg). See Jerome *Commentariorum in Esaiam libri I–XI* 11.6 CCSL 73 150–2. The word *minabit* derives from the Latin verb *mino* meaning 'to drive' (as one would animals); see L&S 1147. Cf LXX καὶ παιδίον μικρὸν ἄξει αὐτούς.

1511 Rom 12:20. See 954 and 956 above.

1512 John 3:7

1513 Matt 18:3

the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you.'[1514]

St Augustine, among others, has provided considerable assistance in many of his works for harmonizing the apparently contradictory. The same view should be taken about the deceptive appearance of triviality of which that wicked man Porphyry frequently accuses Scripture.[1515] Apparent absurdity is dispelled by tropes and allegories. Sometimes it also helps to understand the consistency of the argument if you examine the passage carefully and detect that the same sentiment has been expressed in different words, again if you remember that neither the prophets nor the evangelists relate things in the order in which they took place but sometimes as they came to mind, a form of control exercised by the Holy Spirit in order to be useful to us somehow. One should also note that some things seem the same when they are merely similar; again that some things happened twice: for example, Moses twice drew water from a stone,[1516] though many believe that it happened only once. Chrysostom reckons that Christ twice drove the sellers and buyers from the temple with the lash, on the grounds that the evangelists are in remarkable disharmony over the matter of time.[1517]

Some are troubled by their failure to note the person under whose name a statement is made, for certain books of canonical Scripture are based on a character, like Job and the Song of Solomon, though even in the books that do not have a dramatic nature the speaker sometimes silently takes on another role to serve a didactic purpose. Because Paul's words at Romans 7 ('For we know that the Law is spiritual, I however am carnal, I have been sold under sin; for I do not understand what I am doing, for I am not about the good that I want but I am doing the evil that I hate,' etc)[1518] seemed inappropriate to so great an apostle, the interpretation of earlier authorities was that Paul there, for the purpose of teaching, had taken upon himself

* * * * *

1514 John 6:54

1515 Porphyry (c 232–c 303), Neoplatonist philosopher, wrote a scathing fifteen-book critique of Christianity (Κατὰ Χριστιανῶν), which was ordered burned by the emperor Theodosius II in 448; he also wrote a *Vita Plotini*. Erasmus is likely following Augustine's *De civitate Dei* for his exposition and understanding of Porphyry's critique; see *De civitate Dei* 8.12, 10.32, 12.20, 13.19, 19.22–3, 22.27–8. See ODCC 1309; R. Joseph Hoffmann *Porphyry's Against the Christians: The Literary Remains* (Oxford 1994); and Andrew Smith *Porphyry's Place in the Neoplatonic Tradition: A Study in post-Plotinian Neoplatonism* (The Hague 1974).

1516 Exod 17:5–7 and Num 20:7–13

1517 John Chrysostom *Homily LXVI (On Matthew XXI 12, 13)* NPNF 1st series 10 409.

1518 Rom 7:14–15

the person of an imperfect Jewish man who still either served the flesh or was fighting with the flesh in a war of doubtful outcome. Likewise, in Ecclesiastes many things are said out of character that hardly suit one who is speaking by the inspiration of the divine Spirit. One might detect something of the sort even in Christ himself, for when he says to the Canaanite woman, 'It is not good to take the bread of your children and throw it to the dogs,'[1519] he is talking in the character of an ordinary Jew rather than in accordance with his own thinking; otherwise he would himself have sinned by doing what he declared was not good. Rather he assumed that role in order to make the woman's faith more apparent and at the same time to demonstrate to the unbelieving Jews through this scene how effective faith is, which extorted a miracle from Christ even against his will, so to speak, inasmuch as he finally said, as though worn out and defeated, 'O woman, your faith is great. Let it be done as you wish.'[1520] Again, when he says to the disciples, 'Those whose sins you have forgiven, have their sins forgiven,' etc[1521] the apostles take on the role of bishops and priests, the Lord himself takes the role of God and man. Again, when he says to the attendants, 'If you are looking for me, allow these to go away,'[1522] the Lord is talking in the character of any bishop or pastor, the apostles take the role of the ordinary person; for it is characteristic of the faithful pastor,[1523] should the situation demand it, to expend his life for the safety of the group entrusted to him.

In addition, since Christ and his mystical body are the same thing, the Lord takes upon himself certain things that apply to his members rather than to him. For example, the words from Psalm 21 that Christ adopts while hanging upon the cross, 'Far from my salvation the words of my offences,'[1524] pertain to the body of Christ, whose sins he received in himself; otherwise it would display extreme impiety to attribute sin to Christ. Again, in Psalm 68, which they attribute allegorically to the suffering Christ, he speaks in the character of his body: 'Lord, you know my folly, and my offences have

* * * * *

1519 Matt 15:26; Mark 7:27; see *Annotationes in Matthaeum* 15:26 ASD VI-5 242.

1520 Matt 15:28; cf Mark 7:29.

1521 John 20:23

1522 John 18:8; *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 199; and *Annotationes* LB VI 407.

1523 Cf John 10:11.

1524 Ps 22:1 (Vulg 21:2): 'O God my God, look upon me: why hast thou forsaken me? Far from my salvation [are] the words of my offences.' In the gospel narratives of Matthew (27:46) and Mark (15:34) only the words of the Psalm, 'O God my God, look upon me: why hast thou forsaken me?' are spoken by Jesus on the cross. Erasmus, however, attributes not just these words but the entire Psalm as Christ's utterance during his crucifixion.

not been hidden from you.'[1525] In like manner he is represented in dirty clothes at Zechariah 3,[1526] and when he has been cleansed of sins, a change of clothes is given, and 'If you walk in my commands'[1527] is said. All these things are transferred from the members to the head because the head and body are one thing, just as husband and wife are one flesh, which Paul calls the great mystery in Christ the groom and the church his bride.[1528] Even common sense and the common way of speaking recognizes this indivisible association. If someone should injure a foot or other member, the tongue shouts, 'Why are you injuring me?' though it has not been injured but is alone in having the power to speak for all the limbs. Likewise, Christ shouts, when already immortal and open to no harm, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?'[1529] That great Gregory,[1530] deservedly called the Theologian, brings into this discussion Paul's words at 1 Corinthians 15,[1531] that when God subjected everything to the Son, then even the Son himself would be rendered subject to the Father. Yet Christ, according to his divine nature, neither is nor ever will be subject to anyone, since he is equal to the Father; he was never in rebellion against the Father after his assumption of humanity but showed himself obedient all the way to the cross;[1532] but if you consider that head and body are a single person, all things are not yet subject to him, nor is he himself wholly subject to the Father on account of our rebellion.[1533]

Similarly, because there are different natures in the hypostasis or person of Christ,[1534] certain things are predicated of the man that fit him only according to his divine nature; on the other hand, certain things are praedicated of the Word that fit him only according to his human nature.[1535]

* * * * *

1525 Ps 69:5 (Vulg 68:6)
1526 Zech 3:3–4
1527 Zech 3:7. Erasmus seems to be quoting from memory. The Vulgate reads: 'If you walk in my ways . . .' (*si in viis meis ambulaveris* . . .).
1528 Eph 5:31–2; cf Gen 2:24.
1529 Acts 9:3–5 and 26:14
1530 Ie Gregory of Nazianzus; see Nazianzus *Oration* 30.4 95–6.
1531 1 Cor 15:24–8
1532 Phil 2:8
1533 See the end of book 4 for Erasmus' vision of the reparation of the world in Christ. There Erasmus discourses on the restoration of universal order in Christ through our adoption of the philosophy of Christ.
1534 See below where Erasmus speaks of the three natures of Christ: 'For he was a threefold giant consisting of three natures, so to speak, a human body, a human soul, and a divine nature.' See 988.
1535 The theological doctrine is that, because of Christ's having two distinct natures in one and the same person (*prosopon*), an exchange of predicates (*communicatio*

Examples of the former are everywhere to hand, such as when he says in John, 'No one has ascended into heaven except the Son of Man, who is in heaven';[1536] for Christ at that time, according to his assumption of humanity, was not in heaven. An example of the latter is when the Apostle writes, 'God so loved the world that he handed over to death his only begotten Son.'[1537] Christ was handed over for death only according to his human nature and is called the only begotten Son of God only according to his divine nature. In fact 'Christ' itself is a word belonging to human nature, for he was not anointed with grace according to his divine nature; he was never anointed even according to his body but according to his soul, for he was a threefold giant consisting of three natures, so to speak, a human body, a human soul, and a divine nature.[1538] Moreover, the unity of his person causes certain things to be said indiscriminately about him without regard for the special kind of his natures. You would rightly say that God died for us, though he died neither according to his divine nature nor according to his soul but only according to the body that he assumed, and in the Creed he is said to have descended to hell, evidently according to his soul,[1539] since his body did not descend there.

To this I think it will not be absurd to connect the fact that, just as he was God and man in the same person, so you may detect in that whole dispensation in accordance with which he lived on earth the clear traces of his supreme nature and our earthly one alike. He is conceived in a woman's womb, but from the Holy Spirit and with an angel as groomsman;[1540] the former suited him as man, the latter as God and Son of God. He was carried

* * * * *

idiomatum) allows for statements about Christ in his human nature to be made of Christ in his divine nature, and vice versa (eg in Christ [the man] God suffered; Mary is the Mother of God; the child born in a manger is consubstantial with the Father), which was important for developments in the Christology of Ephesus and essential to the Christological doctrines of Chalcedon; see Grillmeier I 346–550; and J.N.D. Kelly *Early Christian Doctrines* (New York 1960) 143.

1536 John 3:13; see *Annotationes* LB VI 352E.

1537 John 3:16

1538 See book 4 1027. The Christological definition of the Council of Chalcedon makes clear that in his human nature Jesus had a body and a soul ('... eum perfectum in humanitate, Deum vere et hominem vere, eundem ex anima rationali et corpore, consubstantialem patri secundum deitatem et consubstantialem nobis eundem secundum humanitatem ...') DS 301.

1539 See *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 306–11, where Erasmus discusses the later inclusion of this phrase ('descended into hell').

1540 Cf Luke 1:26–35; Matt 1:20–5. Luke gives the angel's name, Gabriel.

for the normal period of months and grew within the recesses of a human body, but when not yet born, he is recognized by Elizabeth as the Lord.[1541] He is recognized by John, who at that time was himself being carried. He is proclaimed by Zechariah as the Redeemer of the world arising from on high.[1542] He is born in human fashion, but as God; he was born before all the ages from God the Father; he is born from a woman, but from a virgin; he is born without the commingling of a man, and he consecrated his mother's purity rather than violating it. He was wrapped in swaddling bands in the fashion of other children,[1543] but in the resurrection he unwrapped himself from his bands.[1544] He was laid in a manger, but angels from heaven sing a hymn worthy of God for him.[1545] A bright star marks him;[1546] the magi, scorning Herod, adore and honour him with mystical gifts. He is circumcised as an infant,[1547] but he is recognized by Anna and Simeon as 'the light of the nations and the glory of the Israelite people.'[1548] He flees into Egypt but smashes the Egyptians' idols.[1549] At the age of twelve he disputes in the temple with experts in the Law, questioning and listening in turn, but the old men marvel at something in the boy that is greater than man.[1550] He obeyed his parents, but it was not a human voice when he said, 'Why is it that you looked for me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's

* * * * *

1541 Luke 1:41–4. See *Paraphrasis* LB VI 226A; VII 291D. See *Annotationes in Lucam* 1:41–4 ASD VI-5 462.

1542 Luke 1:67–79

1543 Luke 2:12

1544 Erasmus refers here to the linen cloth used for Jesus' shroud, which presumably he shed at his resurrection; see Luke 23:53; Matt 27:59; Mark 15:46: John 19:40, 20:6–7. See *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 216–7.

1545 Luke 2:14

1546 Matt 2:2, 7, 9

1547 Luke 2:21

1548 For Simeon and Anna, see Luke 2:25–38; the quotation is Simeon's at 2:32; see *Annotationes in Lucam* 2:25–38 ASD VI-5 481–8.

1549 Matt 2:13–21. Chomarat identifies Erasmus' reference as *The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew* 23, where Mary with the child Jesus goes into a temple in Egypt. There 'all the idols prostrated themselves on the ground, so that all of them were lying on their faces shattered and broken to pieces.' See also J.K. Elliott *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation Based on M.R. James* (Oxford 1993) 96. The Egyptians were reputed to be the most idolatrous of the nations; see Jerome *Commentariorum in Esaiam libri XII–XVIII* 19:1: 'For no nation was so given to idolatry and venerated as many innumerable monstrosities as Egypt . . .' (13.45 CCSL 73A 512).

1550 Luke 2:46–8

business?'[1551] Weary from a journey, he seeks water,[1552] but he also turns tasteless water into excellent wine at a wedding.[1553] As God he also proclaims, 'Come to me all you who toil and are burdened and I will restore you.'[1554] He also promises to those who acknowledge him the living water that gushes into eternal life.[1555] To those who believe in him he promises that they too will pour forth rivers of living water from their belly.[1556] He is dipped in the water as a man,[1557] but as God he sanctifies the waters and renders them effective for washing away everyone's sins. He prays as a man;[1558] but as he prays, the Holy Spirit descends onto his head and settles, and his Father's voice is heard: 'This is my beloved Son.'[1559] He came to the baptism with sinners, but he is honoured by John's witness: 'Behold the Lamb of God, behold the one who takes away the sins of the world.'[1560] The former was praise of a man, but an innocent one; this latter applies only to God. He is tempted, albeit willingly;[1561] but he overcame, and overcame for us. He was hungry, as is human, but after forty days; but he also filled many thousands of men from a few loaves.[1562] He sails in a ship,[1563] but when he wants he also walks upon the waters,[1564] and he raises Peter when he sinks as soon as he doubted.[1565] He was weighted down by sleep, but when wakened he commands the winds and sea with a word; and soon a great calm has been created in place of a fierce storm.[1566] He pays the two drachmas, but drawn from a fish that he pointed out.[1567] He is called 'demoniac,'[1568] but he also drives out every kind of demon by the power of

* * * * *

1551 Luke 2:49
1552 John 4:6–7
1553 John 2:1–11
1554 Matt 11:28
1555 John 4:14
1556 John 7:38
1557 The reference is to Jesus' baptism; see Matt 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–2.
1558 Matt 14:23, 26:36–44; Luke 6:12, 9:18, 22:41–5; Mark 14:32–9
1559 Matt 3:17, 17:5; Mark 1:11, 9:6; Luke 3:22, 9:35; 2 Pet 1:17
1560 John 1:29
1561 Matt 4:1; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2
1562 Matt 14:15–21, 15:32–8; Mark 6:37–44, 8:1–9; Luke 9:13–17; John 6:5–13
1563 Matt 8:23–9:1; Mark 4:33–5:21; Luke 8:22–37
1564 Matt 14:24–34; Mark 6:47–51; John 6:16–25
1565 Matt 14:28–31
1566 Matt 8:24–7; Mark 4:36–40; Luke 8:23–5
1567 Matt 17:23–6
1568 Matt 12:24; Mark 3:22; John 8:48–52, 10:20–21; cf Luke 11:15.

God.[1569] He asks what is the inscription and what the image on the coin,[1570] but he also replies so often to the silent thoughts of the Pharisees.[1571] He asks where Lazarus is laid, but he also summons him from his tomb with his voice alone.[1572] He is attacked with stones but is not touched.[1573] He is dragged to the precipice but escapes untouched through the midst of the ambush.[1574] He weeps but in deploring our unhappiness.[1575] And he also, when he wants, drives out a crowd of mourners to rouse the daughter of the leader of the synagogue[1576] and turns a widow's tears into joy by restoring to her a living son in place of a dead one. He felt the troubles of a human nature,[1577] but he also drives away every kind of disease and trouble with a nod.[1578] Spat upon and whipped,[1579] he had neither beauty nor comeliness in the eyes of men,[1580] yet to David he appears beautiful beyond the sons of men;[1581] but he is also transfigured upon the mountain,[1582] his face shines beyond the brightness of the sun, his robes surpass the whiteness of snow. As man he bore the appearance of a slave,[1583] but as God he blazes with the number and rapidity of his miracles. And there is no reason for someone to interject here, 'Other saints also produced miracles.' I grant it, but none so many, none with such effective power, none with like authority, for never do we read of Christ praying or invoking his Father's aid when he was about to produce a miracle.

* * * * *

1569 Matt 12:22, 28; Luke 11:14, 20
1570 Matt 22:17–22; Mark 12:14–17; Luke 20:21–6
1571 See eg Matt 9:3–5; Mark 2:6–7; Luke 20:21–6.
1572 John 11:34, 43
1573 Cf John 10:31. John says only, 'The Jews then took up stones to stone him.' There is no mention of Jesus being attacked with stones.
1574 Luke 4:29–30
1575 Cf John 11:35, Luke 19:41.
1576 Mark 5:35–43; Matt 9:18–26; Luke 8:40–56
1577 Cf Matt 9:36; see *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 23: 'But he truly put on a human body; that is, he put on the whole nature of a man, not even disdaining the part by which we are in bondage to death and differ least of all from the race of dumb animals. And he did not put it on for a time, soon to lay aside what he had put on, but in order to confirm faith in his human nature, not put on in pretence, he dwelt on earth for a long while; he thirsted, he hungered, he was afflicted, he died; eyes saw him, ears heard him, hands touched him.'
1578 See eg Matthew 8–9 and passim in the Gospels.
1579 Matt 26:67; Mark 14:65, 15:15; John 19:1–3
1580 Cf Isa 53:2.
1581 Ps 45:2 (Vulg 44:3)
1582 Matt 17:1–9; Mark 9:1–8; Luke 9:28–36
1583 Cf Phil 2:7; cf Isaiah 53.

He did indeed have his power from the Father, but it was the same as the Father's. He is judged by Caiphas, is accused, and fell silent like a lamb.[1584] But when, after swearing by the living God, he said, 'Afterwards you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the power of God,'[1585] etc, he spoke with the voice of the divine, for sitting at the right hand is the mark of an equal; equality with God belongs to God alone. He is raised upon the cross, but there he conquered Satan.[1586] He hangs between the thieves, but he says to one of them with a royal voice, 'Today you will be with me in Paradise.'[1587] He suffers horrors as a man, but the onset of darkness proclaims him God.[1588] He dies, but after giving out a mighty shout.[1589] He lays down his soul, but of his own free will, having the power to take it up again.[1590] The veil of the temple is rent, rocks are split, the dead live again.[1591] He dies, but by that death he restores life to the world.[1592] He is buried,[1593] but he also rises immortal without the tomb being opened.[1594] He descends to hell,[1595] but he returned triumphant, taking rich plunder away with him.[1596] He is

* * * * *

1584 Matt 26:57–65; Mark 14:53–64; see Isa 53:7.
1585 Matt 26:63–4; Mark 14:61–2
1586 Cf Heb 2:14–15.
1587 Luke 23:32–43
1588 Matt 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44
1589 Matt 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46
1590 John 10:17–18
1591 Matt 27:51–3; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45
1592 1 Cor 15:21–2
1593 Matt 27:59–60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53; John 19:41–2
1594 'Without the tomb being opened' (*non aperto sepulchro*): The evangelists all speak of the stone covering the tomb as being rolled back (Matt 28:2; Mark 16:3–4; Luke 24:2; John 20:1). Erasmus is likely emphasizing that Jesus' resurrection, which was witnessed by no one, did not require the stone to be removed from the tomb, as resurrected bodies could pass through doors (cf John 20:19 and 26); also, the removal of the stone seems to have been done for the convenience of Jesus' followers, that they might ascertain he was not there.
1595 'He descends to hell' (*descendit ad inferos*): this is not in the gospel accounts, but it is added later to the Creed (though after the Nicean Creed); cf *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 306–10 and notes.
1596 Cf Ps 68:18 (Vulg 67:19); Eph 4:8. Erasmus refers to the souls of the just awaiting him in the underworld; cf *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 309–10: 'Certain persons have also offered many such explanations of this short added clause, recounting whom Christ took with him from hell, whom he left there, what he said to whom at different meetings. It is enough for us that he was born a human once in the flesh, that he really suffered, that he really died and was buried, that he came to life again when the same soul returned to his natural body.'

drawn up into heaven while his body is visible,[1597] but he sends the Paraclete, through whom he generously bestowed heavenly treasures among men.[1598] If someone should philosophize in this manner throughout Christ's whole life, how his person shared in different 'natures'[1599] (if it is right to use that word, which St Augustine however did use),[1600] he will discover proofs of God and of man flashing everywhere in turn.

Now, the thrust of my argument is pinching my ear, so to speak, to remind me that I should say a few words about the rules of Tyconius,[1601] by whose talent Augustine seems to have been delighted though he despised the man's dogma, for he was in the faction of the Donatists or Donatians, though he disagreed with them on many points. In fact he fought with them quite bitterly in his published works; Augustine says that 'he was undefeatable in writing against them and at the same time was found to have a thoroughly absurd way of thinking, where he was unwilling to leave them completely.'[1602]

He calls the first rule 'On Christ and his mystical body,'[1603] which is the church, from which, as it were, a single person is somehow constructed, and Scripture modifies its language in such a way that it passes sometimes from head to body, conversely from body to head. He adduces an example

* * * * *

1597 Ie the ascension; see Acts 1:9–11; Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51.

1598 Acts 2:1–41; cf John 14:16 and 26, 15:26, 16:7. See *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 171–4, 182–3, 185–6; *Annotationes* 14 LB VI 397E.

1599 Literally translated, the phrase 'shared in different "natures"' (*illius persona e variis naturis fuit permixta*) suggests that Christ's divine nature and human nature were somehow 'mixed' or 'intermingled' with one another; but *permisceo* can also have the idea of 'sharing with' and (here) being 'united from different natures.' See the following note.

1600 The Council of Chalcedon (451) expressed the one person and two natures of Christ differently: '... one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, made known in two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation ...' Quoted by J.N.D. Kelly *Early Christian Doctrines* (New York 1960) 339–40; cf DS 301–2. Augustine's use of the term is cautious; see Ep 137.11 (written c 411 or 412) WSA II-2 218: 'How would we not admit that two incorporeal realities could more easily be united than one incorporeal and one corporeal one, provided the term "union" or "mixture" is not applied to these things in an inappropriate manner on account of our familiarity with corporeal things, which are far different and known in another way?'

1601 'Pinching my ear'; see *Adagia* I vii 40 *Aurem vellere* 'To pluck by the ear.' On Tyconius (Ticonius), see *Ticonius: The Book of Rules* trans William S. Babcock (Atlanta 1989); and 'Tyconius' ODCC 1648. See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.30–37.42–56; and 'Tyconius' in *Augustine* 853–5.

1602 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.30.42

1603 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.30.42–43

from Isaiah 61, 'Like a groom adorned with a crown, and like a bride decorated with her jewelry';[1604] the title of 'groom' pertains to Christ, that of 'bride' to the church. However, it will be possible to produce an example from the Scriptures more suitable than this.

The second he calls 'On Christ's twofold body';[1605] Augustine prefers 'On the mixed church,' for there is a church unknown to us in which there are only the pious and predestined to life. And yet, on account of the sharing of the sacraments, even those who live impiously and heretics are tolerated when mixed with the good in the church, just as bad fish are dragged to shore mixed with the good ones in the evangelical net until the separation is accomplished through the angels.[1606] He adduces an example from the Song: 'I am black, but beautiful, like the tents of Kedar, like the skin of Solomon.'[1607] He thinks that the words, 'I am black like the tents of Kedar,' pertain to bad Christians because the tents of Kedar belong to Ishmael, but he refers the words, 'But beautiful like the skin of Solomon,' to pious Christians and the living members of Christ, though this example too seems rather forced and is lacking in weight because it relies upon an allegory. More appropriate is what he relates from Isaiah 42, 'And I shall lead out the blind into a road which they do not know, and I shall make them walk in paths of which they are unaware. I shall turn darkness into light before them, and make the crooked ways straight.'[1608] These indisputably pertain to those who believed in the coming of Christ, but the prophet's words suddenly pass to those who opposed the gospel: 'They have turned back,' etc,[1609] though not even this example squares sufficiently with the rule, for according to the allegory the Lord is not speaking about the Jews particularly but about all the nations, of which some believed, some turned to worse things; therefore this passage pertains more to the fourth rule.

He gave as title to the third rule 'On the promises and the Law' or, as Augustine prefers, 'On the letter and the spirit' or 'On grace and the law.'[1610] The gospel is the promise of grace through faith without works;[1611]

* * * * *

1604 Isa 61:10. See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.31.44.
1605 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.32.45
1606 See Matt 13:47–50.
1607 Song of Sol 1:5 (Vulg 1:4); Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.32.45
1608 Isa 42:16
1609 Isa 42:17
1610 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.33.46. Erasmus appears to be giving Augustine's title by memory, which reads: *De spiritu et littera* (*On the Spirit and the Letter*).
1611 See Rom 3:28: 'For we account a man to be justified by faith, without the works of the law.' Cf Rom 4:2 and 6, 9:30–2, 11:6; Gal 2:16; Eph 2:9.

the Law frightens with its commandments and overthrows the moral sense, calling for works without adding grace.[1612] But all good works arise and are nourished from faith as from a root.[1613] Here the reader of the holy books ought to be careful and alert so that, when he sees that works are demanded,[1614] he does not judge that he can fulfil the instruction by his own strength or think that, when he reads that those who are of the faith are free from the Law,[1615] he is not obligated by any commandments of the Scriptures. The Law, which lights the way, shows what must be done, what avoided; grace makes it possible for us to do what we are commanded. Yet we should not automatically become downcast if, on account of the weakness of the flesh that we carry about, we do not provide fully what the Law prescribes, so long as we persist in faith and charity, for the goodness of Christ spontaneously makes up the deficiency of our strength; for he himself is our justice and our perfection,[1616] if only we remain in him.

He calls the fourth rule 'On genus and species' or 'On the whole and the part.'[1617] Often in the Scriptures something that pertains to everyone is said about Babylon or some other nation. According to this scheme, what fits Christ particularly is also transferred to his members; on the other hand, what is said about the whole church is applied to individual persons. Sometimes Scripture passes from species to genus. There is an example at Ezekiel 36. The earlier part of the prophecy expressly fits the house of Israel: 'Not on account of you will I act, house of Israel.'[1618] But what follows, 'And I shall pour out over you clean water and you will be cleaned of all your stains,'[1619] etc, also pertains to those of the nations that have believed. Akin to this is the fact that Scripture frequently says something that pertains only to certain persons as though it were about everyone, such as when the Lord

* * * * *

1612 See Rom 7:7–11 and *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 41–5.

1613 See *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 46–7: 'And so if the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus Christ from the dead, truly dwells in you, he will not be idle . . . And so all those who are impelled by the Spirit of God are sons of God. Sons imitate and reflect the character of their father and eagerly do of their own accord what they feel will be pleasing to him . . .' Here Erasmus puts his finger on the key difference between his position on grace and free will and that of Luther: there exists a kind of necessary relationship between justifying faith and doing works of righteousness by virtue of the 'Spirit' who is 'full of life and effective' within us. Cf Gal 5:6.

1614 Cf eg Eph 2:10; 1 Tim 5:10, 6:18; James 2.

1615 Rom 8:1–15; Gal 3:1–13

1616 Cf 1 Cor 1:30.

1617 See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.34.47–9.

1618 Ezek 36:22

1619 Ezek 36:25; see *De doctrina christiana* 3.34.48.

says in the Gospel, 'When I am lifted up from the earth I shall draw all things unto me.'[1620] Does it not seem that the conversion of all mortals is being promised? But believers have been few if they are compared with those who have persisted in disbelief. Such is Paul's remark, 'All seek that which is their own'[1621] (this does not apply to Peter or to Barnabas or to many others), likewise the words of the Psalm, 'All turned away, all together they were made useless. There is no one to do good, there is not even one.'[1622] This and what follows do not square with all the Jews. In every people there are, as it were, two peoples, one comprised of the good, one of the bad. Israel is twofold. When it is praised apparently in comprehensive terms, this should nevertheless be understood only of the pious ones; on the other hand, when it is accused, this should be taken of the wicked ones. The same principle should be applied to the Pharisees, the rich, Christians, priests, monks, princes; what has been said in general should be applied to specific cases.

This is expounded at length by whoever it was that wrote the two rather elegant books *De vocatione gentium*[1623] – for the style is quite different from that of Ambrose. In the same place he adds another rule about taking the times into account. For in the Scriptures what pertains to men of different times is sometimes set forth as though it were said about a single nation of the same epoch, for instance Peter's words, 'But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,' etc, 'who were once not a people, but now the people of God; who had not achieved mercy,'[1624] etc. When the Apostle wrote this, those who were called 'not a people' were then not among the living, and yet the language of Peter or of the prophet[1625] sounds as though those who previously had been abandoned now seem to be chosen; but locutions of this kind pertain not to the same men but to men of the same nation.

* * * * *

1620 John 12:32
1621 Phil 2:21
1622 Ps 14:3 (Vulg 13:3)
1623 Ie *On the Calling of the Gentiles*. J.-P. Migne states that Erasmus believed this to be the work of St Eucherius, bishop of Lyons (d c 450), but the work is now believed to be that of Prosper of Aquitaine (less likely of Pope Leo the Great); see Prosper of Aquitaine *De vocatione omnium gentium* CSEL 97. Erasmus refers to this work in *Hyperaspistes* 2, and there he attributes it to Ambrose, but not without some reservation; see CWE 77 339 n11, 380 n154, 648, 652 n1344, 684, 717.
1624 1 Pet 2:9–10, alluding to Hos 1:9: 'And he said: Call his name *Not my people*: for you are not my people, and I will not be yours' (DV).
1625 Hos 1:9, 2:23–4; cf Exod 19:5–6.

It is not altogether unrelated to this that prophetic language has sometimes been so weakened that while many factors, if interpreted literally, point to a single person, say a king, and, if interpreted allegorically, point to someone else, perhaps to Christ, yet certain things are added that make sense only through allegory and would not fit both persons. Psalm 88 provides an example: 'I have placed assistance in the powerful, and I have exalted the chosen one from my people. I have found David my servant, I have anointed him with my holy oil. For my hand will assist him, and my arm will strengthen him,'[1626] etc. These words simultaneously fit both David according to the literal sense and Christ according to the spiritual sense, but I do not know whether the words 'And I shall set that firstborn higher than the kings of the earth'[1627] fit David.[1628] Yet the words 'And I shall set his seed for ever and ever and his throne like the days of heaven'[1629] only fit Christ, as also do the words 'Once I swore in my sanctuary, I will not lie to David: his seed will remain for eternity, and his throne like the sun in my sight and like the full moon forever.'[1630]

There is something similar in Isaiah 14, where certain things are added that do not fit literally with Nebuchadnezzar and therefore are interpreted as belonging to the devil Lucifer, such as the fact that he fell from heaven to the earth[1631] and that he said in his heart, 'I shall ascend above the height of the clouds, and I shall be like the Most High.'[1632] In fact, throughout the whole of this prophecy of Isaiah that is woven in chapters 13 and 14, certain things are said that clearly pertain to the impending overthrow of Babylon by the Medes, but things are mixed in that cannot be understood of the earthly Babylon, such as, 'It will not be inhabited until the end,'[1633] etc, for it is agreed that Babylon was rebuilt and inhabited after that destruction. But numerous examples of this sort occur in the prophetic texts. For the sake of brevity I refrain from listing them; it is enough to have indicated a sample for the thoughtful.

* * * * *

1626 Ps 89:19–21 (Vulg 88:20–2)
1627 Ps 89:27 (Vulg 88:28). At this point Erasmus' examples from Psalm 88 do not repeat Augustine but are his own.
1628 David was the youngest of Jesse's eight sons; see 1 Sam 16:1–13.
1629 Ps 89:29 (Vulg 88:30)
1630 Ps 89:35–7 (Vulg 88:36–8)
1631 Isa 14:11–12; Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.37.55
1632 Isa 14:14
1633 Isa 13:20

I return to the rules of Tyconius,[1634] in the fifth of which he lays down rules about 'quantity of times' and about 'numbers.' According to Matthew 17, Christ took up three disciples to a vision of the mountain after six days,[1635] according to Luke after eight days;[1636] this is not consistent unless you understand through synecdoche that part of the day on which the Lord said this and part of the day after the event are counted as two days. Christ saying that he will rise after three days is similar.[1637] He presents an example concerning number from the Psalm, 'Seven times in a day I spoke praise to you,'[1638] so that the meaning agrees with 'His praise is always in my mouth,'[1639] though neither utterance is without a trope, inasmuch as 'seven times' has been put for 'frequently' and 'always' placed for 'constantly. Peter was told to forgive his brother up to seventy times seven times,[1640] though the Lord means that a brother should be forgiven whenever he has sinned and returned to his senses; but this method has a rather broad application, and it has been discussed above.

Tyconius entitled his sixth rule 'Recapitulation.'[1641] In order to explain something more clearly, Scripture frequently defers what it began and returns to what it had said earlier. For example, there is a return to the description of Paradise and the placing of man in it in Genesis 2, though this was done in the first chapter.[1642] We have noted something similar in John 18 concerning Christ being led to Caiaphas and about Peter's denials.[1643] Augustine also adduces other examples in which there is a less obvious return to an earlier subject.

The seventh rule of Tyconius is 'On the devil and his body,'[1644] which, as it were, constitute a single person just as Christ and the church do; and by a similar method certain things are said in the Scriptures about Satan that are recognized instead in his members, while conversely certain things are said about bad men that are more truly stated about the devil.

* * * * *

1634 See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.35.50.
1635 Matt 17:1
1636 Luke 9:28
1637 Mark 8:31; Matt 12:40; John 2:19–20
1638 Ps 119:164 (Vulg 118:164)
1639 Ps 34:1 (Vulg 33:2)
1640 Matt 18:22
1641 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.36.52–4
1642 Gen 1:26–31 and Gen 2:8–9
1643 Cf John 18:28. See *Annotationes in Joannem* ASD VI-6 156–7; Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.36.52–4.
1644 Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 3.37.55

I have run through this as compendiously as I could. Augustine discusses it more fully in book three of his *De doctrina christiana*, in chapter 30 and in some of the following ones. In the earlier ones he imparts various methods of explaining the difficulties that can give pause to those with little experience of the mystical books.

In chapter 2 of his *Ad Honoratum*, on the usefulness of believing, he reports that he heard from some unidentified persons (for he does not give their names) that the Scripture of the Old Testament as a whole is imparted in four ways: literally, aetiologically, analogically, and allegorically.[1645] Literally, when the teaching concerns what was said or what was done or indeed not done, but written as a matter of fact; aetiologically, what was done or said for what cause: in Greek αἰτία means 'cause,' hence αἰτιολογία, *causae redditio* [giving the cause] (some have substituted 'etymology' for this word); analogically, when it is shown that the Old and New Testament nowhere disagree but are everywhere in harmony, for in Greek ἀναλογία [analogy] is the comparison of different things on account of some similarity between them (for this some have substituted 'anagogy'); allegorically, however, when it is taught that many things that have been written should not be taken according to the literal sense but as having been said figuratively.

It is thought to be literally true that in Matthew the Lord replies to the Jews who slandered the apostles by saying that they had plucked some ears of wheat on the sabbath, rubbed them in their hands, and eaten them (they were driven by hunger), saying, 'Have you not read what David did when he himself and those who were with him were hungry, when he entered into the house of God and ate the loaves of consecration, which neither he nor those who were with him were permitted to eat but only the priests?'[1646] There is no trope here; rather what was done in the New Testament is defended by an action related in the Old Testament.[1647]

It is a case of aetiology that, when the Lord had taught that it was not lawful to divorce one's wife except for adultery, and the Jews had objected that Moses had permitted dismissing one's wife for any reason so

* * * * *

1645 Augustine *De utilitate credendi* (*On the Profit of Believing*) CSEL 25/1 1–48; NPNF 1st series 3 345–66; see 349: 'All that Scripture therefore, which is called the Old Testament, is handed down fourfold to them who desire to know it, according to history, according to aetiology, according to analogy, according to allegory.'

1646 Matt 12:1–5

1647 See Deut 23:25 for the permission to glean corn on the sabbath; see 1 Sam 21:2–7 for David's eating of the loaves of proposition; see Lev 24:5–9 for the precept concerning the loaves of proposition.

long as one gave her a bill of divorce,[1648] Christ neither rejected what was adduced from the Old Testament nor changed his own opinion but resolved the matter by giving an explanation. 'Moses allowed you this on account of the hardness of your heart,'[1649] he said, showing that Moses' concession was temporary and that the same was not permissible under the light of the gospel. One might make a similar case as follows: it was once said, 'Increase and multiply,'[1650] and the patriarchs had many wives; yet the Gospel calls those men blessed who have castrated themselves for the kingdom of God.[1651] But this difficulty is resolved by giving a reason why they were permitted polygamy, namely for the propagation of the human race; when this had multiplied sufficiently, it was useful to refrain from taking a wife in order to propagate the gospel throughout the world. One should speak similarly about the sacrifices and other ceremonies that were prescribed to the Jews for specific reasons, whether to prevent them from slipping into the rituals of the pagans or so that they could prefigure the coming of Christ. These have deservedly been banished like shadows before the light of truth that shone with the advent of Christ. Some instructions are at first glance absurd, with no reason given. For instance, at Deuteronomy 22 Moses forbids the use of clothing woven from linen and wool.[1652] He forbids plowing with an ox and ass joined.[1653] If we said that plowing is awkward with two unequal beasts of burden, the reason seems too trivial to be compatible with divine Law; moreover, who does not know that an ox and an ass do not fit the same yoke? If we say that clothing incorporating linen is forbidden because linens were once a luxury, linens should have been forbidden completely. Sometimes the reason given for the Law seems no less ridiculous than the Law itself. It says, 'You will not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed lest the sowing which you have sown and what is born from the vineyard be sanctified alike.'[1654] What was the danger if each were sanctified alike? In things of this sort, therefore, an explanation must be sought in allegory, as Paul turns 'You will not bind the mouth of an ox that is threshing'[1655] into an allegory, saying, 'Surely God does not care about oxen?' In fact God

* * * * *

1648 See Deut 24:1: 'If a man take a wife, and have her, and she find not favour in his eyes, for some uncleanness: he shall write a bill of divorce, and shall give it in her hand, and send her out of his house' (DV).
1649 Matt 19:8 (see 19:3–9); cf Deut 24:1–2.
1650 Gen 1:28
1651 Matt 19:12
1652 Deut 22:11
1653 Deut 22:10
1654 Deut 22:9
1655 1 Cor 9:9; cf Deut 25:4.

cares even about little sparrows,[1656] but the principal reason was the one that the allegory indicates.

Now, through analogy one shows the congruence of the Old and New Testament, a matter in which devout men have striven mightily trying to demonstrate by producing countless examples that there is no commandment in the New Testament that is not also given in the Old, and that nothing was done that was not either predicted by the prophets or adumbrated by types.

That leaves allegory, of which I think I have spoken sufficiently above.[1657]

But Augustine wrote this work when a presbyter, not yet fully trained in Holy Writ, and wrote it to a friend, but a Manichaean.[1658]

Perhaps a number of rules could be collected from authors old and new, but I think the most effective rule of all is, as Augustine correctly advises, to love the holy books before we learn them and to be utterly convinced that there is nothing in them either false or trivial or written by a human mind but that, whatever appearance it displays, everything is full of the heavenly philosophy and worthy of the Holy Spirit if it is understood as it ought to be, and then to read the whole body of Scripture carefully with this in mind and to render it familiar by prolonged reflection.[1659]

Here it would be time to end the third book of this work, except that in the first book we promised that we would say a few things at greater length about judgment and design;[1660] though if anyone remembers what we said in various passages above, I think an intelligent person will conclude that enough has been said on both topics, for we showed which of the various forms of allegory it is most appropriate to choose and again that, with the entire theme laid before the eyes together with all its sections and resources, only those parts should be selected which will seem more useful for teaching and more effective for moving the minds of the audience and more appropriate for holding people's attention with some attractive message, and

* * * * *

1656 Matt 10:29, 31; Luke 12:6–7

1657 See book 3 876, 896, and passim.

1658 Erasmus is referring to Augustine's *De utilitate credendi*, which he wrote in 391 or 392 to a friend Honoratus while a priest at Hippo Regius; see 999 above; cf *Retractiones* (*The Retractions*) 1.13 CSEL 36 65–71; FOC 60 58–63.

1659 See Augustine *De doctrina christiana* 1.35.39–1.40.44.

1660 The Latin for 'judgment and design' is *iudicium* and *consilium*. The two words are multivalent and difficult to translate; both are forms of 'judgment': *iudicium* seems to mean a judgment on the facts, *consilium* comes closer to 'strategy,' like Cicero's decision to forgo his customary lengthy exordium in the trial of Verres so as to avoid a change in the court that would have been favourable to his opponent.

among these to choose the best so as to avoid problems from a multiplicity of choices. The same should be done in the case of arguments and statements, for though Quintilian disagrees with those who subjoin judgment to invention (on the grounds that someone whose inventions are foolish or useless is not really exercising invention and that judgment and design should be applied not only there but in all the offices of the orator, in all the parts of the oration),[1661] there is nevertheless a certain selection among what is useful, and in the heat of invention many things seem appealing to us at first glance that are displeasing when examined more closely. In addition, it has been indicated which vices are to be denounced before a mixed crowd, which ones left unmentioned or treated summarily, which again are to be described and treated at length, furthermore how language should be adjusted in accordance with the intelligence, capacity, and disposition of the audience – in short how one should consider throughout the address what is demanded by the subject, the person, the time, the place, custom, and all the while what is appropriate as well. These things of course are matters of judgment, which Quintilian thinks can no more be imparted by a manual than the sense of taste or smell, for all of this proceeds from nature and from an understanding of the matters at hand.[1662]

Demosthenes' design is praised because, when he was urging the Athenians to wage war,[1663] he adjusted the tone of his speech in a remarkable way so as to create the hope of better success in the future without hurting the feelings of the people, whose carelessness had caused the fighting thus far to be conducted with little success. He shows therefore that nothing so far had been carried out in a rational manner, for carelessness could be corrected; otherwise, if there had been no error, there was no reason to hope for a better outcome in the future. Again, had he attacked the sloth of the people, he would have alienated their minds. It is difficult in effect to persuade the angry, and so in defending the freedom of the state, he chose to praise their ancestors who had administered it with the greatest courage, for that people had responsive ears; and it naturally followed that, as they approved the better course, they regretted the worse. Quintilian discusses more things from Cicero,[1664] but this is sufficient for our purpose.

Consider here whether Peter did not speak even more judiciously before the Jerusalemites,[1665] dispelling above all the suspicion of drunkenness;

* * * * *

1661 Quintilian 3.3.5–6
1662 Quintilian 6.5.1
1663 Quintilian 6.5.7–8
1664 Quintilian 6.5.9–11
1665 Acts 2:14–40; see *Paraphrasis in acta* CWE 50 107–12.

for who would believe people that were delirious with wine? Moreover, since it would be invidious if they claimed the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he did not resort to human reasoning in dealing with their suspicion of drunkenness, but he uses the witness of a prophet when addressing Jews because the authority of the prophets was sacrosanct in their eyes.[1666] Nor does Peter say anything about himself in particular but about the disciples, for he does not say, 'We are not drunk' but 'These men are not drunk.' And he recites the prediction of Joel as though this great gift had been poured out not upon those few alone but upon all the Jews if only they believed in Jesus, saying, 'And your sons and your daughters will prophesy,'[1667] etc. He adds an admirable conclusion: 'And everyone who invokes the name of the Lord will be saved.'[1668] Moreover, as to what had necessarily to be said about the crucifixion of Jesus, he tells the story frankly to be sure, but without any reproach.[1669] In fact he reduces the magnitude of the crime since he says that it was done by God's definite plan and foreknowledge, and he casts the blame upon certain wicked men by adding, 'Through the hands of the wicked.' He does the same more clearly in chapter 3,[1670] saying, 'And now, brothers, I know that you acted through ignorance, as did your leaders as well. But God, who declared through the mouth of all his prophets that his Christ was to suffer, brought it thus to fulfilment.'[1671] Similarly, he casts the odium of so impious a crime upon the age itself, saying, 'Be saved from this corrupt generation.'[1672] Moreover, since the memory of the miracles produced by Christ was fresh, he makes them witnesses themselves, saying, 'In the midst of you, as you know.'[1673] It was also a matter of design that before an uneducated crowd of Jews he does not openly pronounce Christ to be God; he only calls him a man approved by God,[1674] and he avows a little later only that God had made this Jesus, whom they had affixed to the cross, the Lord

* * * * *

1666 Peter quotes Joel 2:28–32.
1667 Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17
1668 Acts 2:21 and Joel 2:32
1669 Acts 2:23
1670 Acts 3:17–18
1671 Erasmus' citation of Acts 3:17–18 here differs from the Vulgate and his own Latin translation of the Greek New Testament. Here the translator incorporates Erasmus' *(Deus) qui*, which is either a slip or a typographical error for *quae*, which gives instead the sense 'But God, who declared through the mouth of all his prophets that his Christ was to suffer, brought it thus to fulfilment.'
1672 Acts 2:40
1673 Acts 2:22
1674 Acts 2:22

and Messiah whom they were awaiting in accordance with the prophets' promises.[1675] Similarly, in another address he calls Jesus Christ the Son of God.[1676] The Jews, who abhorred heathens because they made many gods and had it fixed firmly in their own minds that there was only one God, would hardly have endured a man who died on the cross being called God right off at the start of the preaching; it was sufficient for a few things to be scattered throughout the narration to show that in Christ there was something greater than man. There is no reason for some to start protesting at this point; what I am saying has been carefully noted by many of the orthodox, and the brilliant Gregory of Nazianzus approves this method of teaching in his book *De theologia*.[1677] Nor would I approve if someone were to speak of Christ that way now before Christians, but given the kind of audience that fell then to Peter's lot, I will praise the thoughtfulness of a speaker who defers to its proper time what would be said in vain and would cause offence if said before its time. But if they do not think it fit that this is noted by very holy men, they seem to have forgotten that the Lord, when he first sent his followers to preach, forbade them to say that he was the Messiah.[1678] For the same reason Peter does not say, 'He raised himself' but 'God raised him from the dead,'[1679] and yet he could truly have said this in keeping with the teaching of the Gospel, 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it.'[1680] He does not prove the miracles by the testimony of the Scriptures, for they were performed under the gaze of all the Jews, but he proves the resurrection, which few had seen, from Psalm 15, 'Because you will not leave my soul in hell, nor will you allow your holy one to see corruption.'[1681] However, since that Psalm has the heading 'For David Himself,' the Jews referred this prediction to King David, as they also do in many others. But Peter shows by clear reasoning that the words of the prophet do not fit David but were fulfilled in Christ, who lay in the tomb only for part of the sixth day and the night, likewise the whole sabbath with part of the night, and his flesh did not experience corruption.

* * * * *

1675 Acts 2:36
1676 Acts 3:13
1677 Gregory of Nazianzus *De theologia* (=*Theological Oration* 27; or *Oratio theologica* 1); cf chapter 3. Gregory of Nazianzus is not addressing these passages in *Acts* but discussing in general rules about when, what, and with whom it is appropriate to discuss matters of theology; Nazianzus 25–35.
1678 Matt 16:20; Mark 8:30; Luke 9:21
1679 Acts 2:24
1680 John 2:19
1681 Acts 2:27 and Ps 16:10 (Vulg 15:10)

Moreover, Peter was afraid that the Jews might not be pleased to hear that David, who had a splendid reputation with them, had been buried and had rotted in the tomb like other men. So he softened in advance what necessarily had to be said, saying, 'Brothers, let me be allowed to speak freely before you,'[1682] and he calls him by the honorific title of patriarch and prophet;[1683] and to remove all offence he shows that David himself spoke of Christ, not of himself, when he wrote those words.[1684] His frequent repetition of 'Men and brothers,'[1685] like that of 'Men of Israel' in the other address,[1686] helps to avoid offence, for this title was extremely agreeable among the Jews. Finally he reveals by whose grace all this had been said so that they would recover their senses and receive in the name of Jesus Christ the same gift of the Spirit that they marvelled at in others,[1687] showing that Joel's prediction pertained not to those few but to all of them, saying, 'For the promise is for you and your children.'[1688] He does not yet declare explicitly that Joel's promise pertains to the gentiles as well; he only says, 'And for all who are far off, whomever the Lord has summoned,'[1689] which the Jews took as having been said not about the gentiles but about all the Hebrews who had been scattered through various countries. It is Paul who openly declares that God is the God not of the Jewish nation alone but of all nations as well,[1690] for the gospel had already shone forth. What about Peter? He says, 'The God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers,'[1691] adjusting his words in accordance with the feelings and practice of the Jews. Again, when he explained that Jesus had been promised not by one or two of the prophets but by all of them,[1692] he added, in words calculated to win their favour, 'You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, "All the families of the earth will be blessed in your seed"; for you first did God raise his son, sent him to bless you.'[1693] It could have roused ill will if he had

* * * * *

1682 Acts 2:29
1683 Acts 2:29–30
1684 Acts 2:25, 34–5
1685 Cf Vulg Acts 2:29.
1686 Acts 13:16
1687 See Acts 2:12, 36–8.
1688 Acts 2:39
1689 Acts 2:39; see Isa 57:19 and Joel 2:32.
1690 See Rom 10:12–13; Gal 3:28.
1691 Acts 3:13
1692 Acts 3:18
1693 Acts 3:25–6; cf Gen 12:3 and 22:18.

said only that Jesus, whom they had crucified, had been raised by God to such a level of honour. But now all ill will is removed when he adds that the whole of what was done in Christ was done for their salvation. And yet there were some among them who had spurned Christ so often, hurt him with reproaches so many times, sometimes plotting to push him down from a steep place and to stone him, finally some who had cried out in angry voices, 'Crucify, crucify.'[1694]

Pious men have also noted the tact and shrewdness with which Paul at Athens in the district of Mars[1695] first announced Christ to the gentiles who were quite unfamiliar with the philosophy of the gospel.[1696] Among them were Epicureans,[1697] who say that there are no gods or, if there are, say that they do not care about the affairs of mortals; and Stoics,[1698] a useless audience for the grace of the gospel inasmuch as they equated their 'wise man' with the gods and placed man's highest good in the strength of man himself; the rest of the crowd, in a wretched fog, worshipped all sorts of demons instead of the true God. Before such an audience wouldn't one need sound judgment if he wanted to be heard with any profit? How then does Paul – that outstanding artist in words – do it? Some things were needed: to express abhorrence of idolatry and to preach the one true God, the only hope of salvation for those who had come to their senses, though only through faith in Jesus Christ. But what tact and restraint he uses in suggesting these things! Does he begin with curses on the sin of idolatry? Does he call the gods of the Athenians wood and stone or, worse than this, impious spirits hateful to God and enemies to the human race? Does he reproach them for wicked crimes as a result of which they had been given over to a corrupt understanding, the sort of charge he made in the Epistle to the Romans? Not at all, for this would not have been effective. Rather he says,

* * * * *

1694 Cf Matt 27:22; Mark 15:13; Luke 23:21; John 19:6.

1695 Erasmus means the Areopagus, which is literally 'the hill of Ares' (the god whose equivalent in Roman religion was Mars); but he seems to have derived the word not from πάγος (*pagos*), meaning 'hill,' but from πᾶγος (*pāgos*), the Greek form (attested in Plutarch and other writers) of the Latin word *pagus* meaning 'a country district or community' (OLD), which overlaps at times with the semantic range of *vicus*, the word here translated as 'district' ('a group of dwellings, village' [OLD sv 1], 'a block of houses, street, group of streets, etc, in a town, often forming a social or administrative unit' [OLD sv 2]). (Translator's note)

1696 Acts 17:16–21. See *Paraphrasis in acta* CWE 50 107–11 and notes.

1697 Acts 17:18; for Epicureans, see *Paraphrasis in acta* CWE 50 107.

1698 Acts 17:18; for Stoics, see *Paraphrasis in acta* CWE 50 107.

quite moderately, that he has learned from their images and monuments that the Athenians are not altogether free of superstition.[1699] The word 'superstition' is milder than 'idolatry,' and even this he mitigates through the comparative form 'somewhat superstitious' (for this is what Luke wrote),[1700] and again he softens this further by adding 'as though.' What is the meaning of the Apostle's politeness? What is his aim? What is he after? Surely he was not afraid of the Athenians? Not at all; rather he is aiming to get the upper hand, and he succeeded. He was aware, even before he came to Athens, that the Athenians were devoted to the worship of images, as other nations were too. But to avoid seeming to have brought an unfavourable opinion about the Athenians with him or to be meddling in a foreign state, he says that he has learned of their superstition from the images set up in public and not through deliberate search, but chancing to pass by.[1701] And he does not call them idols or monuments of impiety but uses the gentler word σεβάσματα, which also has a good meaning, for whatever we worship or venerate can be called a σεβάσμα. It was also a matter of tact that he does not report the inscription of the altar as it was, 'To the gods of Asia and of Europe and of Africa, to gods unknown and foreign' (for they wanted this altar to be dedicated to all the gods and had added 'to gods unknown and foreign' to prevent any god being angry at being passed over), but he says that he saw an altar inscribed 'To the unknown god,'[1702] selecting from the inscription what was going to be useful. And yet there is no falsehood here, for the inscription with the addition of 'To gods unknown' acknowledges that there is some god unknown to the Athenians. What did he accomplish with such discretion? Obviously that their ears would be readier to listen if he did not seem to be the founder of a new religion – which was punished by death among the Athenians – but to be preaching a God that they themselves had long since been worshipping, though without being aware of it. A similar line of argument is found also in rhetorical treatises, employed to demonstrate that the proposed action under discussion has already been accomplished. There once was a law that threatened punishment for exiles if they approached the boundaries of the city from which they had been expelled. Some exiles approached the walls of their city and freed their homeland from siege by driving away the enemy. A debate arose whether they ought to be received back into the city on account of that act of

* * * * *

1699 Acts 17:22
1700 Acts 17:22: 'rather superstitious' (*quasi superstitiosiores*)
1701 Acts 17:23
1702 Acts 17:23. See *Paraphrasis in acta* CWE 50 108.

loyalty.[1703] A supporter of this position employs this line of argument, that they had already been received back when they showed by their remarkable loyalty that they did not deserve exile and had been restored from that time by the silent votes of their homeland. Now consider the words that he uses to define 'the unknown.' He does not say, 'The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob,' as Peter did speaking before the Jews,[1704] but by tempering his speech in such a way that he can be heard with patience by heathens: 'The God who made the world and everything that is in it.'[1705] Philosophers also used to dispute whether the world had been created, and Plato admits that it was created by the children of chosen gods whom he calls 'demons.'[1706] Ovid, moreover, did not shrink from writing, 'God and better nature sundered this conflict,'[1707] and Paul adds, 'Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he does not dwell in temples made by hand, nor is he worshipped by the hands of men, as though he needed something, since he himself gives life to all and breath and everything.'[1708] Thus far he says nothing that cannot be tolerated, for among the heathens there was no lack of those who admitted that there was a single highest god whom they believed to be designated by the name Jupiter, whose powers were expressed in the various names of the gods and goddesses, such as foreknowledge in Apollo's, wisdom in Minerva's, bravery in Mars', etc. Virgil said, 'Everything is full of Jupiter.'[1709] Many heathens both believed and wrote that the world is guided by the providence of that highest god. In fact the very ancient story of Prometheus shows that they held the fantastic notion that the first human being was formed from clay, and so they were not offended when they were told, 'He made the whole human race from one so that they might dwell on earth in different regions,'[1710] with the addition of a natural

* * * * *

1703 Antonius brings this up in Cicero's *De oratore* as 'an example of the simple cases given to boys in the schools,' an exercise he regards as simplistic and of little relevance to the real work of the orator; see *De oratore* 2.24.99–100. See also Quintilian 7.6.5–7 (cf 4.4.4), who treats the question differently. See also book 2 636 above.

1704 Acts 3:13

1705 Acts 17:24

1706 See *Timaeus* 29C–30A, 41A, 42D–E.

1707 Ovid *Metamorphoses* 1.21

1708 Acts 17:24–5

1709 Virgil *Eclogues* 3.60

1710 Acts 17:26. Erasmus' translation of this passage from the Greek differs somewhat from the Vulgate. Vulgate: 'fecitque ex uno omne genus hominum inhabitare super universam faciem terrae definiens statuta tempora et terminos habitationis eorum'; Erasmus: *fecit ex uno omne genus hominum, in hoc ut habitarent in terra diversis regionibus*.

light by which they might be led from creation into knowledge of the true God,[1711] though one might grasp the power, wisdom, and goodness of the deity even from what is within us; for the very fact that we are alive, that we move, that we are something, is the gift of God, who created us and preserves us once created. Nor do you ever hear anywhere the witness of the prophets that Peter used before the Jews; rather he produces the witness of Aratus, 'We too are his offspring,'[1712] not indeed naming him but what was better suited to persuasion, saying, 'Just as some of your own poets have also said'[1713] (though I suspect that the word 'poets' is a rather recent addition, the proof being perhaps that the very ancient Irenaeus does not include 'poets' when citing this passage, nor does Augustine),[1714] as though he were saying, 'I do not adduce the testimonies of the prophets that you scorn, but you should not reject writers of your own belief.' Then, though he produces the words of Aratus alone, he nevertheless uses the plural number, '[They] have said,' because the same sentiment is in Callimachus,[1715] Homer, and Hesiod, Πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε ['Father both of men and of gods'][1716] and not only in poets but in other writers too, just as it was reported of Alexander the Great that he was the son of Jupiter not because he alone was, but because Jupiter, though he is the father of all men, nevetheless particularly acknowledges as his children those who excel in virtue and are especially beneficent towards other people.[1717] Now observe the exceptional tact with

* * * * *

1711 Chomarat identifies this 'natural light' (*lumen naturale*) as the light of reason; ASD V-5 297 134n.

1712 Acts 17:29; the citation is from the Stoic poet Aratus of Soli, Cilicia (c 315–240 BC), author of the poem on astronomy, *Phaenomena*, line 5a (τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος εἰμέν). The phrase was quoted and alluded to by other authors in the ancient world; see eg Cicero *De legibus* 2.3.7: '*A Iove Musarum primordia*,' *sicut in Aratio carmine orsi sumus*. ' "With Jupiter the Muses commence their song," to quote from my version of Aratus' poem.' See especially *Paraphrasis in acta* CWE 50 288 n48.

1713 Acts 17:28

1714 See Irenaeus *Against Heresies* 3.12.9 ANF 1 433 ('As certain men of your own have said'); and Augustine *Confessions* 7.9.15 ('As certain men of their own have said'). The Vulgate uses the phrase *quidam vestrum poetarum*, as does the Greek New Testament: τινες τῶν καθ' ὑμᾶς ποιητῶν. But see the critical apparatus for Acts 17:28 in Vulg 375.

1715 Erasmus refers to Callimachus, perhaps *Hymn* 1 (to Zeus), but this phrase does not occur in Callimachus, though the idea is there in a very general way. The phrase is common in Homer *Iliad* 1.544, 4.68, 5.426 and *Odyssey* 1.28, 12.445, 18.137; see also Hesiod *Theogony* 542.

1716 'Father both of men and of gods' was a standing epithet of Zeus (Jupiter) from Homer on. (Translator's note)

1717 See Plutarch *Alexander* 27.6: 'All mankind are under the kingship of God, since in every case that which gets the mastery and rules is divine . . . although God

which he adapts the witness of Aratus to his purpose. If God, by whose kindness we breathe and live, is not absent from each one of us,[1718] he is certainly not visible or corporeal or perceptible by any sense, much less than our soul, since he is, as it were, the soul of our soul. Then, if we are his offspring, it is not appropriate for children to have a lowly opinion of so great a parent, for it is agreed that the mind is by far the more outstanding part of a man and that without it the body is nothing. And yet the body of a man is far superior to the images of wood, stone, bronze, silver, and gold in which there is neither sense nor motion and which have been created not by God but by a craftsman.[1719] Hence those who worship images regard as God something that is more worthless than the inferior part of man. You see the great caution and the great moderation that he used to show that the worship of idols is superstition rather than religion. Surely this was an opportunity for raging against the blindness of the Athenians because, though they had learned these ideas from their authors, they nevertheless worshipped mute and dead things instead of God, but not even here does he say anything particularly harsh. He attributes the whole madness of previous ages to the times themselves and to God's dissimulation,[1720] in order to excuse whatever had been done so far through the ignorance in which God allowed men to stumble blindly for a time only so that now they might come to their senses at the gleaming light of the gospel.[1721] Not even here does he direct his words specifically at the Athenians, but he speaks in general to offend them less, saying, 'So that everyone everywhere may do penitence.'[1722] He shows that forgiveness for the past is available to those who turn to the better, that otherwise a severe judgment threatens those who scorned the deity's enormous grace.[1723] And he does not say, 'We announce that judgment threatens you, and you must take refuge in penitence,' but says, 'God

* * * * *

was indeed a common father of all mankind, still, he made peculiarly his own the noblest and best of them.'

1718 Acts 17:27–8

1719 Cf Acts 17:29.

1720 For 'God's dissimulation,' see Acts 17:30. See *Annotationes* 47 (LB VI 502F) where Erasmus translates the Greek words ὑπεριδὼν ὁ θεός ('God indeed having winked' DV; 'God overlooked' RSV) and explains the meaning of ὑπεριδεῖν as 'to dissimulate, as it were' or 'pretend not to see' in that time of human ignorance. Erasmus also views this in the rhetorical sense of *dissimulatio*, which he discussed earlier in connection with Gregory of Nazianzus' comments on Jesus where he uses *dissimulatio* (963 above).

1721 Cf Acts 17:30.

1722 Acts 17:30

1723 Acts 17:31

announces.'[1724] No mention so far of Christ, of whom they had no knowledge, for the natural method of teaching starts with what is known. Notice here how sparingly Paul mentions Christ, though he proclaims his majesty with such a sublime trumpet in his Epistles: no mention of his divine nature, silence likewise about the cross, which was foolishness to the gentiles.[1725] He calls him only a man whom God had brought forth so that, by illuminating truth through him, forgiveness of all sins might be given freely to those who return to their senses, while the unbelieving, now beyond forgiveness, receive their just punishment. And he does not adduce the testimonies of the prophets here but uses only a single argument to prove what he has said, that 'God raised him from the dead,'[1726] for the majority of people are convinced that he died and that he rose again.[1727] With this argument, proof was presented to everyone, but 'some laughed at the mention of resurrection, others more polite said, "We will listen to you about this again."'[1728] Anyone who is eager to learn more has made some progress. At this point it seems that the Apostle's speech was interrupted as his listeners left him and he was unwilling to press them further; but he 'went out from their midst,'[1729] according to Luke, awaiting a more suitable opportunity. And the very fact that Paul was not spat upon or attacked with abuse or assaulted by the laying on of violent hands but departed unharmed, though not without profit, was due to his discretion. He taught more fully those who clung to him, among them Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and certain others along with them.[1730] From this it is clear how effective language is when tempered with a prudent civility. I could point to tactfulness in other speeches by the apostles, but I do not want to burden the reader. These will suffice for the intelligent.

Someone will say, 'This is all old stuff: what does it have to do with today's preachers?' I admit that, because Christ's name has shone throughout the entire world, he need not be mentioned with a similar moderation, yet preachers are often in situations where judgment and tact are needed in a similar way, such as when they are forced to maintain their authority before the

* * * * *

1724 Acts 17:30
1725 1 Cor 1:18–25
1726 Acts 17:31
1727 Erasmus' argument seems to be that many people witnessed Christ's death and some met him after his resurrection. There is therefore empirical evidence for these facts. The additional inference that Paul is making is that this miracle was the work of God. (A. Dalzell)
1728 Acts 17:32
1729 Acts 17:33
1730 Acts 17:34

people, which cannot be done unless they say something about the eulogies they have received. But there is no subject about which a man is by temperament more sensitive. He does not tolerate any appearance of boasting, even if what is being said is perfectly true and even generally admitted. In fact, they hardly endure someone being praised by someone else, and so the ancients used to apply remedies against bewitchment.[1731] Therefore, it is necessary in this case to describe methods that show how someone can praise himself without incurring hostility. Whatever virtue may be in us must be played down prudentially; let us attribute it to divine generosity, which has bestowed it for the benefit of the listeners. We shall similarly play down any outstanding accomplishment of ours by saying we wanted to accomplish it rather than accomplished it, and that we wanted it for the sake of those very people to whom we are speaking, and then by sharing all the praise with our listeners, ascribing any notable accomplishment of ours to their prayers or insistence, in fact, making them the witnesses of certain services of ours and deferring judgment about ourselves to them; finally, by giving the impression throughout our speech that we have been reduced to saying these things against our will – and not without embarrassment. We should refrain throughout from invidious comparisons and also from lowly abasements: what sort of person would he be if a doctor of theology with an exceptional knowledge of Holy Writ should say that he is the most ignorant of all men? For these words contain more irony than modesty. It is enough to say, 'If, with the help of God's grace, I have achieved any knowledge of theology through long study' and 'If the Lord has deigned to bestow something upon me for your benefit.'[1732]

How cautiously the apostle Paul avoids the odium that accompanies arrogance when he was forced to defend his authority against the false apostles before the Corinthians.[1733] He assumes the character of a foolish

* * * * *

1731 See eg Pliny *Naturalis historia* 28.3.10–28.8.40. Pliny gives abundant information on public and private rites, rituals, prayers and other 'scrupulous actions' to ward off evils and spells and to win blessings; see for example his discussion of the Romans' superstitions: 'Why do we meet the evil eye by a special attitude of prayer, some invoking the Greek Nemesis, for which purpose there is at Rome an image of the goddess on the Capitol, although she has no Latin name. Why on mentioning the dead do we protest that their memory is not being attacked by us?' See also Pliny 7.2.13–16. On the ancients' intolerance of self-praise, see Plutarch *Moralia* (*De se ipsum citra invidiam laudando*), which explains why self-praise is offensive, why and how it is to be avoided.

1732 Erasmus' words here recall the exordium of Cicero's *Pro Archia*; see also Cicero *De inventione* 1.16.22 for advice on not provoking envy and on garnering 'good will' in others with one's skills as a speaker.

1733 2 Cor 11:12–13

man and asks that they, being wise themselves, listen to his words patiently as though they were spoken by someone who was foolish,[1734] for intelligent men are usually less angry if someone who is inexperienced on account of age or hardly wise by nature says something rather boastful about himself. It was once the custom for commanders returned from a war to recount their accomplishments before the people.[1735] Their speech was directed to their soldiers and aimed at applause, and so they were permitted to talk rather grandly about themselves: naturally enough, since they were granted a triumph, the most Thraso-like of all things and, if custom did not excuse it, ridiculous.[1736] And yet they were also concerned to avoid ill will by sharing the greatest part of the praise with their soldiers and ascribing their whole success to their gods and to the good fortune of the people rather than to their own valour or prudence. But Paul calls 'weaknesses' all the outstanding exertions that he had endured for the sake of the gospel and the enormous dangers that he had undergone in his zeal to help everyone.[1737] When he came to the mention of his vision, he suppresses his own name and introduces in his place another person: 'I know a man,' he says.[1738] And he adds a conclusion: 'I became foolish. You compelled me.'[1739] He makes the same people witnesses of his services, saying, 'I have been manifest to you in everything.'[1740] He does the same thing in remarkable fashion at 1 Thessalonians 2: 'For you yourselves also know, brothers,'[1741] and again in the same place 'Both you and God are witnesses,'[1742] etc. Finally, see how much

* * * * *

1734 2 Cor 11:19

1735 Livy (45.40–1) mentions the custom of Roman commanders giving speeches on their exploits and provides Lucius Paullus (Paulus) Aemilius' oration on the occasion of his triumph over the Macedonian king Perseus in 167 BC. Lisa Jardine notes that in 1526 Simon Grynaeus 'discovered the final five missing books of Livy in a fifth-century manuscript in the library of the Benedictine abbey at Lorsch in Hesse'; 'this manuscript ... was used as the copy-text for Froben's 1531 edition of Livy'; see her *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York c 1996) 209–10. For more on the Roman triumph, see Mary Beard *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, Mass 2007); and Francisco Pina Polo 'Procedures and Functions of Civil and Military *contiones* in Rome' *Klio* 77 (1995) 203–16.

1736 Thraso (Captain Thraso), from Terence's *Eunuchus*, is the boastful soldier who proclaims, 'I certainly have a peculiar gift that lends grace to all my actions' (395–6).

1737 See 2 Cor 11:30 and 12:9.

1738 2 Cor 12:2

1739 2 Cor 12:11

1740 2 Cor 11:6

1741 1 Thess 2:1–5

1742 1 Thess 2:10

humility he employs while calling miracles as witness, saying, 'Although I am nothing, nevertheless the evidence of my apostolate was given among you in all perseverance in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.'[1743] In 1 Corinthians 7, though he knew with certainty that he had the spirit of God, he nevertheless said, to avoid ill will, 'But I think that I too have the spirit of God,'[1744] and he did not add this pointlessly but in order to assert the fidelity and authority of his teaching. Yet whatever suited an apostle would not also suit any preacher whatsoever.

Moreover, one must everywhere have regard for decorum.[1745] Greater modesty[1746] is required of a young man, especially if he has not yet won himself affection and authority in the eyes of the congregation by his actions and services. It is less offensive for older men to talk about themselves. Something is also attributed to the grandeur of a character, say if a bishop or a cardinal should be speaking who is also commended, beyond the dignity of his office, by his learning and the sanctimony of his life.[1747]

Similarly, when the occasion requires an attack upon certain vices to which the whole congregation or the prominent persons of the congregation are prey, of course one needs discretion. You would scarcely find anyone of so calm a disposition that he would patiently endure being upbraided, especially among those inflated by their wealth, nobility, honours, or leadership, whom it is not expedient to provoke with barbed words. Theodosius is praised for his patience,[1748] but that was the praise of one man towards a single individual. What will the preacher do here? First, he will temper his censure in such a way that he shows that he resorts to it against his will and is not pursuing his own interest but is moved by the danger of those whom he sincerely wishes well out of his charity; he is compelled by his delegated

* * * * *

1743 2 Cor 12:11–12

1744 1 Cor 7:40

1745 'Decorum' (*aptum*, *το πρέπον*): Erasmus reiterates this most important quality in preachers; see 768 n211, 865, and 983 n1499 above. See eg Quintilian 11.1.1–93; Cicero *Orator* 20.70–22.74; and Lausberg §§1055–9.

1746 For 'modesty,' cf Quintilian 12.9.12–13.

1747 Quintilian makes no allowance for boasting: 'All kinds of boasting are a mistake, above all, it is an error for an orator to praise his own eloquence, and, further, not merely wearies, but in the majority of cases disgusts the audience' 11.1.15.

1748 See Ambrose *De obitu Theodosii* (*On the Death of Theodosius*) CSEL 73/7 371–401; FOC 22 303–2. Erasmus is likely referring to Theodosius' prolonged penance after the massacre of many inhabitants of Thessalonika, for which Ambrose demanded that the emperor do public penance: 'I have loved a man who esteemed a reprover rather than a flatterer (34; *Dilexi virum, qui magis arguentem quam adulantem probaret*).

office to have regard for their salvation, inasmuch as he is going to render an account to the Lord on their behalf. Meanwhile one should avoid leaving a taste of bitterness or animosity from the rebuke but should season it with a considerable admixture of charity and kindness, sometimes of praise as well: 'I should wish, dearest ones, that you who are commendable for so many virtues not allow your glory to be stained by that blemish or blot.' Such is the phrase in *Phormio*, 'As your other deeds are,'[1749] and Paul's 'You were running well.'[1750] Sometimes a crime needs to be extenuated somehow, for instance if he should say that something in which many were implicated was the work of a few, and cast part of the blame onto others or onto error or ignorance; thus Paul calls the defection of the Galatians from the gospel 'bewitchment,'[1751] transferring the enormity of the crime onto the false apostles. He employs a similar politeness to soften the lack of faith of his people: 'I testify to them that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.'[1752] A kindly attitude excuses many ills in this way. We tolerate the correction of a deed more moderately if affection is demonstrated. Now it will be possible for something that pertains to a prince either to be ascribed to the preoccupations that allow many things to escape his attention or else deflected upon informers and treacherous advisers.[1753] One should constantly aim to spare persons as far as one may; kindness is universally popular.

Moreover, we should be careful not to find fault with a people or a city or an entire social class. For example, some accuse the whole of Germany of drunkenness, though few have this vice and there is no people without members that practise intemperance. They charge Italy with criminal lust,[1754] though most there are unstained by that blot. Some attack monks as though the lot of them were wicked, whereas there are many good men among

* * * * *

1749 Terence *Phormio* 1020: 'So I beg you to show your usual good humour and put up with it.'

1750 Gal 5:7; *In epistolam ad Galatas* in Reeve and Screech (2) 575–6.

1751 Gal 3:1; see *Annotationes* LB VI 911E–F; see *Paraphrasis in Galatas* CWE 42 108.

1752 Rom 10:2

1753 One is reminded of Luther's letter to Pope Leo X that accompanied his *Tractatus de libertate christiana* (*Treatise On the Freedom of a Christian*) (1520); see *Luther's Works* 31 327–79, especially 334–43: 'Meanwhile you, Leo, sit as a lamb in the midst of wolves and like Daniel in the midst of lions... (336) Therefore, my Father Leo, do not listen to those sirens who pretend that you are no mere man but a demigod so that you may command and require whatever you wish...' (341).

1754 'Criminal lust' (*nepharia libido*): masculine homosexuality; see *Annotationes* ASD VI-8 112–13, where Erasmus lays out the meaning of 1 Cor 6:9.

them, some perhaps even among soldiers. Let the same be said of courtiers, tradesmen, and similar kinds of men that the teaching of the church does not attack; for since there is none that is not a mixture of good men and bad, someone who condemns them all lacks credibility because he seems to speak from hatred rather than from judgment, and before a fair-minded audience he procures more ill will for himself than for those against whom he inveighs.

The same thing happens in the praise or criticism of a single person. You would hardly find anyone so perfect that you would not find something lacking in him; on the other hand, hardly anyone is so evil that he does not have some additional quality to be praised. Hence those who praise someone by finding nothing in him at which not to marvel seem either excessively generous or fawning; either way they lack credibility. On the other hand, those who attack some man or other by condemning all his good words and bad ones alike 'according to the white ruler,'[1755] as they say, seem not to be passing judgment on the real situation but raving out of hatred of the man. Some so favour Augustine (for I prefer to cite the ancients as examples) that they consider it a sin to attack anything of his. On the other hand, some have so hated Origen that they can scarcely endure his name,[1756] though Augustine too had his delusions, and Origen compensates abundantly for his lapses with so many outstanding statements. Some exercise the same lack of self-control against those in whose writings they find something that at first glance seems out of harmony with their own tenets. Immediately there rises the savage cry of 'heretic, heretic!';[1757] with their stupid and intemperate shouts they even condemn statements that the orthodox read as pious in the works of the orthodox. If they really want to eject impious teaching, they would do so with greater credibility if they separated what is said correctly from what is said wrongly and if, when something admits of a pious meaning, they assisted it with a helpful interpretation, for what is right should be praised in any person. But someone who approves in the case of a hated person what deserves to be approved will seem to employ sound and reliable judgment when he condemns what he does not approve.

* * * * *

1755 For 'the white ruler' (*amussis alba*), see *Adagia* I v 88 *Amussis alba* 'An unmarked rule'; 'this means "without selection, making no distinctions."'

1756 See especially Godin 427–33 for the anti-Origenism of Noël Béda and members of the Sorbonne faculty. See n1268 above for Jerome's attitude to Origen; for Augustine's attitude towards Origen, see 'Origen' in *Augustine* 603–5. See CEBR I 116–18 for Noël Béda.

1757 Cf *Moria* CWE 27 126.

The rhetorical precept that, whenever circumstance compels someone to speak against parents, brothers, sisters, or other relations, his speech should be tempered so that, in so far as possible, he should be seen to have regard for piety, charity, and kindness should be observed in much greater degree by the preacher towards his congregation.[1758] Paul advises parents not to provoke their children towards bitterness,[1759] and clever men have observed that in comedies no speech of a father is so bitter that it does not have some traces of paternal affection interspersed; and so let the preacher's rebuke be such that it is charity, not anger, that seems to be speaking. It is not appropriate for it to be too bitter or too often repeated or too lengthy, but he should pass on to calmer things in such a way that it is apparent that he has tarried awhile against his will in something that was indeed necessary but rather unpleasant.

There is also a method of mitigating a rebuke by including our own person: 'This vice has been indulged enough so far, dearest ones. Now let us recover our senses and turn to something better'; likewise by making those whom we are rebuking the judges of their own conduct, as Peter did: 'Judge yourselves whether one ought to be more obedient to God or to men,'[1760] 'Let each person ask his own mind whether he wants what he is doing to others to be done to himself, and how much he would be upset if harmed by a similar wrong.'[1761] Let prayers and entreaties be added (these are often more powerfully moving than threats), and let the preacher not be ashamed to do what so distinguished an apostle as Paul was not ashamed to do.[1762] Meanwhile, however, the preacher must beware of falling into flattery as he avoids the harshness of admonition, especially in the presence of the mighty. It is seditious to bark openly against princes, but it is foolish and abject to flatter them openly to their face. Some err in the former fault, but many more are guilty of the latter.

It would also be advantageous if the preacher, when he is going to revile some crime, should introduce the actual voice of Scripture, thus: 'Let those who are conscious of such wrongdoings listen not to me but to Scripture; in fact, let us all listen to God speaking through the mouth of his apostle, let us follow that to which he invites us, let us avoid what the Lord and judge of all threatens.'

* * * * *

1758 See Quintilian 11.1.58–61.
1759 Eph 6:4
1760 Acts 4:19
1761 Cf Tob 4:16: 'See thou never do to another what thou wouldst hate to have done to thee by another' (DV).
1762 Rom 12:1; 1 Cor 1:10; 2 Cor 2:8; Gal 4:12

In fact one should have regard in this connection not only for persons but for the subject, place, and time as well.[1763] How far and to what extent this should be done cannot be laid down in precise rules but judged from the matter at hand, and so counsel is frequently in conflict with the precepts of the art. It is appropriate to say happy things in a time of happiness, but St Basil begins an Easter sermon with a rebuke, deploring the fact that he has suddenly lost the efforts of the whole of Lent because the congregation has relapsed into its usual feasts and pleasures; the small size of his audience provided the occasion for his criticism.[1764] Likewise the language of a preacher should be tempered in different ways in a holy assembly and in a feast, where greater cheerfulness is appropriate and someone who talks nonstop is a nuisance. Again, one should speak in different ways before virgins dedicated to God and before soldiers girded for war. Before a mixed crowd that contains every kind of person one needs great discretion in order not to say anything that might taint the unsullied years and minds of the innocent, again not to offend any person or social class. Some things need to be said in such a way that they are understood only by those to whom they pertain; some things it is sufficient to state in general, such as about modesty in marriage, for it is not useful to explain in detail before a mixed throng all the ways of violating it. The same view should be held regarding virginity. A model of chastity should be presented; it is not necessary to express all the ways in which virginity is tainted even short of intercourse. I know someone who ordered all the virgins present to leave the church when he was about to expound to the congregation the ways in which a husband misuses his wife, but many left who were not virgins, and so it became a joke; and those who were ordered to depart were so much more eagerly anxious to learn from others what those mysteries were. There are many things of this sort that are better imparted as advice in private conversations or in holy confession, a sacrament that, it seems, should not be rejected if only because of its usefulness in this regard.[1765]

Now, the mind of the common man is such that many things that are said innocently are taken in another meaning or are twisted into an excuse

* * * * *

1763 See Quintilian 11.1.14: 'There are two things which will be becoming to all men at all times and in all places, namely, to act and speak as befits a man of honour, and it will never at any time beseem any man to speak or act dishonourably.'

1764 Basil *Homilia* 14 *In ebriosos* PG 31 (1857) 443–64. See book 2 524.

1765 For Erasmus' views on the value of auricular confession, see *Exomologesis* CWE 67 passim.

for each person to flatter his own vices, and so it is necessary for the preacher to have his eyes watching in all directions. For example, if something is said in abhorrence of criminal sexuality,[1766] the whoremongers and adulterers immediately flatter themselves and consider themselves holy and pure, and so their arrogance should be dealt with immediately, as follows: 'I do indeed hope that no one in this assembly is prey to such diseases, but there is no reason for us to be pleased with ourselves on this account, since as a matter of fact there is filthiness in us in great abundance; for we are stained by relations with prostitutes, adulteries, violations of virgins, and incest.'[1767]

The same care needs to be applied in propounding dogmas so that we do not resemble ignorant physicians who destroy the stomach while aiding the liver. The ignorant mob, when it so often hears that the whole Law has been abrogated through Christ, who has redeemed us from the curse of the Law,[1768] takes this to mean that it is permissible for everyone to do what he likes,[1769] though doing wrong is less permissible now that the Law has been abrogated through grace. But the Law has been abrogated for those who provide on their own, out of faith and charity,[1770] what the Law commands and do not claim their works for themselves but ascribe them to the grace of Christ; if anything in these has been omitted or is imperfect through human weakness, they take refuge in the merits of Christ and supply thence what is lacking in themselves.[1771]

* * * * *

1766 For 'criminal sexuality,' see n1754 above.

1767 On incest, see 627 with n836, 774, 911.

1768 Gal 3:13; Rom 3:28, 6:14

1769 Erasmus is likely referring here to the excesses of antinomianism in the wake of Martin Luther's protest against Rome. See George Huntston Williams *The Radical Reformation* 3rd ed, Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies 15 (Kirksville, Mo 1992) 904–12; see especially Ch. Béné 'Érasme et le libertinisme' in *Aspects du libertinisme au XVIe siècle* ed J.-C. Margolin (Paris 1974) 37–50; see also J.C. Margolin 'Réflexions sur l'employ du terme *libertin* au XVIe siècle' ibidem 1–33.

1770 Erasmus repeats the important phrase 'faith and charity,' which stands in contrast with 'faith alone.' This crucial addition of 'charity' differentiates him explicitly from followers of Luther. See 995 n1613 above. See also *Paraphrasis in Iacobum* CWE 44 151 and especially n18 (325): 'Take away love and the word faith is like something dead and inert.' See also *Erasmus and Luther: The Battle over Free Will* ed with notes Clarence H. Miller, trans Clarence H. Miller and Peter Macardle, introduction by James D. Tracey (Indianapolis 2012) especially ix–xxvii (introduction).

1771 'Merits of Christ' (*merita Christi*): Erasmus is using a nonbiblical idea expressed in Clement VI's jubilee bull *Unigenitus* of 1343 (DS 1025), which proclaims the 'infinite merits of Christ' (*infinita Christi . . . merita*) as an inexhaustible and

Likewise, when they hear that man is justified by faith alone,[1772] that there is no justification from our works, and that the nature of our works does not matter so long as we believe that Christ is our justification, the ordinary person distorts this to mean that we should not pursue good works, though there is scarcely anything that the apostles inculcate more than that those who have died with Christ in baptism rise again with him into a newness of life.[1773] But if all our works are evil, as some teach,[1774] nevertheless there is a considerable difference between someone who bestows his own property on the poor and someone who steals another's, between someone who fasts and someone who is drunk, between someone who prays and someone who chatters obscenely. To abandon trust in human works is pious, especially those that do not proceed from faith and charity (which serves a neighbour's good wherever it can) but come close to being rituals,[1775] such as eating or dressing in a certain way or scurrying to Compostela[1776] or Jerusalem. In the same way, when the ordinary person hears that there is no need of satisfaction because Christ has paid the penalty for our sins, he takes this as though one may sin with impunity and be secure amid one's wicked deeds. This mistake is more dangerous than believing that satisfaction is the third part of sacramental penitence,[1777] since it is unnatural for someone who believes with a certainty that God is the avenger of wicked deeds not to fear him as judge, or for someone who burns with love of him as he reflects upon his ineffable kindness towards us not to be upset with himself, not to be angry, not to demand punishment from himself for

* * * * *

undiminishing treasure that can offset the deficiencies of every Christian and so allow the Christian partial or full release from the sufferings of purgatory. The doctrine was the foundation of the church's teaching on indulgences, which was challenged by Luther in his Ninety-Five Theses of 1517.

1772 'Justified by faith alone' is obviously a reference to the then widespread theological writings of Martin Luther.

1773 'Newness of life': Rom 6:4

1774 Erasmus does not mention these 'some,' but this would clearly apply to Luther and the Reformers.

1775 Erasmus addresses the problem of rituals or ceremonies (*caeremoniae*) frequently; see especially *Enchiridion* CWE 66 73–83.

1776 Santiago de Compostela was the shrine of the apostle James (the Greater) and terminus of the great pilgrimage ending in northwestern Spain. See *Moria* CWE 27 122; *Colloquia* (*Peregrinatio religionis ergo*) CWE 40 622–3; and 'Compostela' ODCC 389.

1777 For 'the third part of sacramental penance,' see *Exomologesis* CWE 67 61–70; and DS 1323 (Council of Florence, *Bulla unionis Armeniorum* '*Exsultate Deo*' 22 November 1439).

offending someone so great and of such a nature by his sins. Not to mention meanwhile that those who persist in vices do not always have justifying faith; faith is a living thing – it cannot be idle wherever it is. Let them see to it, therefore, that they do not deceive themselves or are empty of the gift of faith or have it dead and shared with impious spirits.[1778] Is it possible for someone who has robbed the poor not to try to repay the injury with kindness if he truly returns to his senses? Some reject the word 'satisfaction,' but allow 'compensation': I would allow the term to be changed provided the substance remains.[1779] Nor should one simply credit the remission of sins to these good works but rather to divine mercy through trust in Jesus the Redeemer. I have presented a few out of many as an example. The preacher should apply the same circumspection in all the rest in order to avoid opening up a pit for some to fall into while he earnestly commends some virtue, and to avoid striking their heads while he tries to raise them from their prostrate position.

* * * * *

1778 Cf James 2:17: 'So faith also, if it have not works, is dead in itself.' See *Paraphrasis in Iacobum* CWE 44 151. 'Impious spirits' are those who believe in God without loving him; cf 1 Tim 4:1; and James 2:19: 'Even the demons believe – and shudder.' For a discussion of the theology of penance at this time, see W. David Myers *'Poor Sinning Folk': Confession and Conscience in Counter-Reformation Germany* (Utica 1996) 15–103; and Tentler *Sin* passim.

1779 See *Exomologesis* CWE 67 61–70.

THE EVANGELICAL PREACHER
BOOK FOUR

There remains the list or index of the subjects with which the preacher is especially concerned – though it would be better for each person to create one for himself.[1] We shall, however, provide at least whatever small assistance we can for those who are either too busy to spare the time or too indolent to face up to the task.

First of all, therefore, let us set up the various categories of being like the columns of the whole edifice in order to make it easier to arrange everything in its place.[2] Let us therefore first consider that there is, according to Dionysius,[3] a threefold hierarchy: the heavenly, the ecclesiastical, and the

* * * * *

1 Erasmus urges preachers to construct lists of topics for preaching similar to his instructions to teachers to have 'some commonplace book of systems and topics, so that wherever something noteworthy occurs he may write it down in the appropriate column' (*De ratione studii* CWE 24 672). He also encourages teachers to have boys 'trained in topics' (676); Erasmus refers to his *De copia* for instruction on how to do this; see *De copia* CWE 24 635–48. See also *Ratio* 291:15–34, where he gives similar instructions.

2 The architecture of this chapter reflects the general architecture of the *Ecclesiastes*, which Erasmus is careful to arrange in divisions and subdivisions; it reflects too his vision of creation, which he expounds at length in book 4.

3 On Pseudo-Dionysius, see introduction CWE 67 221 n742 above. Dionysius did not write a work on 'political hierarchy.' In the fifteenth century Lorenzo Valla, and subsequently Erasmus, called into question the identification of the author of these works with the historical Dionysius the Areopagite (or Denis). Nonetheless Erasmus is deeply indebted to the author of these works, as are most of the principal scholastic theologians of the Middle Ages; the works of Dionysius continued to enjoy strong support well into the seventeenth century. See eg the edition by the Jesuit Balthasar Cordeiro *Opera S. Dionysii Areopagitae / cvm scholiis S. Maximi et paraphrasi Pachymerae a Balthasare Corderio Soc. Iesv doctore theologo latine interpretata et notis theologicis illvstrata* (Antwerp: ex Officina Plantiniana, Baltharis Moreti 1634). See 'Dionysius (6) the Pseudo-Areopagite' ODCC 485.

political. Although the political is more a part of the ecclesiastical than a distinct kind, nevertheless it is more useful for our present purposes to distinguish it. To provide a full account, two could be added: the monarchical and the spiritual.

The heavenly is that blessed society of the angels who did not change their dwelling place and of the souls that have earned adoption into the companionship of the angels by a pious life while in the body.[4] The felicity of this state, though it is free of all annoyance and even of the fear of evil, is nevertheless not yet complete; it will be completed at the resurrection of the body.

The ecclesiastical is the mystical body of Christ, comprising the pious who still soldier upon the earth and walk in faith and hope.[5] Again, this is understood in two ways: that this word either embraces only the true and living members of Christ who are destined for a blessed immortality and who are known to God alone[6] or else the whole congregation of those living under the common sacraments of the church, which includes and tolerates the evil mingled with the good.[7]

The political is the public constitution of a city or region, which protects the external peace of the populace with laws, plebiscites, customs, and the authority of magistrates, especially in what pertains to property and to physical safety. Nothing forbids this from varying from one city to another, for other kinds of state can exist besides those four known to the ancients: monarchy, democracy, aristocracy, and oligarchy.[8] There can also

* * * * *

4 Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 108 aa 1–8. Erasmus' sketch of the mystical body of Christ is not complete, as he neglects to mention the souls suffering in purgatory (awaiting the immortality of the blessed). In fact, Erasmus never mentions purgatory; and he mentions hell infrequently, and discretely.

5 This description fits the term 'church militant' and the struggle of the 'Christian soldier' of Erasmus' *Enchiridion* CWE 66 24–127. See also Hilmar M. Pabel 'The Peaceful People of Christ: the Irenic Ecclesiology of Erasmus of Rotterdam,' in Pabel 57–93.

6 Augustine's *De civitate Dei* gives a clear expression of 'the living and true members of Christ destined for blessed immortality that are known to God alone'; see 5.16, 14.28–15.1–4. For 'the evil mingled with the good,' see eg *Exposition of Psalm 99* (13) WSA III-19 25–6. See Tarsicius J. van Bavel 'Church' in *Augustine* 169–76.

7 Cf Matt 3:12, 5:45, 13:24–30, 13:47–9; see eg Augustine *De civitate Dei* 5.16, 14.28–15.1–4.

8 On types of government, see Plato *Republic* VIII and Aristotle *Politics* III, especially 7 (1279a22–b10). Despite the many criticisms Erasmus brings against

be conflicting laws in different cities yet without any of them being open to criticism.[9] For example, in some regions the law commands an inheritance to go entirely to the eldest, while in others to the youngest. But because the ecclesiastical hierarchy is ruled by divine laws and by Christ's unchangeable teachings, it must always take the same form, though there may be some variation in certain rites and ceremonies. Now, the political can be in the hands of heathens; nevertheless, for the sake of public order and harmony, the apostles forbad scorning it, pronouncing that that power too was from God and somehow served divine justice in its own way.[10]

The monarchical or universal is the one by which God as king and lord of all drives and guides the universe; this embraces not only the heavenly bodies but also every kind of animal and plant, as well as the wicked demons and the souls consigned to eternal punishments. Though these things are inherently ugly, nevertheless their admixture illuminates the glory of the universe and shows the justice of the supreme monarch.

The spiritual is particular to each person; through it the flesh is kept from scorning divine laws and rebelling against the spirit. It was in reference to this one that the Lord said in the Gospel, 'The kingdom of God is within you.'[11]

Over all these presides God, that highest monarch, the creator, preserver, and governor of all, than whom alone nothing greater, nothing better can be.[12] His essential nature can be comprehended neither by man nor by the angels, and there are no human words for us to speak properly

* * * * *

the folly, hypocrisy, and vices of princes and other secular authority that one finds throughout *Ecclesiastes* and in many of his works, he advocates no change in the hierarchical structure of political order as such, viewing it, as it were, of divine providential institution despite regional and local inflections; rather he urges respectful obedience from everyone subject to higher powers – even when harsh and unjust – and responsible, godly leadership from those elected by God to carry out their duties as rulers in the *respublica christiana*.

9 Cf *Adagia* III vi 55 *Lex et Regio* 'Law and country.'

10 Rom 13:1–10; John 19:11

11 Luke 17:21

12 Cf Augustine *De moribus ecclesiae et de moribus Manichaeorum* (*On the Morals of the Church and of the Manichaeans*) 11.24 PL 32 (1841) 1355; NPNF 1st series 4 76: 'Summum bonum omnino, et quo esse aut cogitari mellius nihil possit, aut intelligendus, aut credendus Deus est, si blasphemiis carere cogitamus.'

about it nor any images of the human mind to represent it truly to our understanding.[13] He is infused through everything yet remains boundless in himself. He sets the limits for everything, yet he himself is unlimited. He created and is creating everything in time; he is himself eternal without time. He preserves and governs everything without worry, with the same gaze he sees everything, present, past and future. He is of one substance, and wisdom, power, goodness, knowledge, mercy, or charity are not separate qualities in him; but all of these form one single essence, and compared to him all creation, however sublime, is nothing, for he alone truly is. For he alone truly is, who is immutable in himself and has no beginning and will have no end. All things should be referred to him, as to their source, at whose nod all things are done. This happens to a remarkable degree in the books of the Old Testament, in which nothing is done or said without mentioning God. It is appropriate, then, that the preacher should frequently introduce the name of God 'so that God is all things in all men,'[14] as the Apostle says.

The devotees of worldly philosophy[15] who imagine a God who enjoys a sort of leisure and attribute everything to nature are mistaken, and they twist to natural causes even what Holy Writ relates as done contrary to the ordinary course of nature, such as about the five cities swallowed up in a

* * * * *

13 See Augustine *De trinitate* 1.1. For descriptions of God's ineffable nature, see eg Augustine *De civitate Dei* 11.21, 18.40; *De trinitate* 15.7; Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* qq 1–43. See Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names* (*De divinis nominibus*) 114: 'Thus, they [the theologians] call it nameless when the godhead itself, in one of the mystical sights of the symbolic manifestation of God, rebukes him who says "What is thy name?" by saying "To what end do you ask my name, for it is the most wondrous of all?"'

14 1 Cor 15:28

15 For the 'devotees of worldly philosophy,' see 1 Cor 3:19: 'For the wisdom of the world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness."'; *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 240; and *Paraphrasis in 1 ad Corinthios* CWE 43 58–9. Erasmus, of course, contrasts this with the *philosophia Christi* and makes clear that the truth is Christ, the wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:24); one need look no further: 'Christ deceives no one who leans upon him. But let each take care lest in wrongly relying on human resources he deceive himself. There is no reason why you should look to the resources of philosophy or the Law for your happiness' (*Paraphrasis in 1 ad Corinthios* CWE 43 58). Erasmus often makes reference to 'worldly philosophy' and 'worldly philosophers' (eg *Moria* CWE 27 99, 101–2 for Democritus) but characteristically does not engage in their philosophical or theological disputes.

hole in the earth where the pitch-bearing lake Asphaltites emerged,[16] which some call 'the Dead Sea.' There is more to be said for those who ascribe everything to a primary cause and make no distinction between a miracle and the things that seem to happen by natural causes except that the latter occur every day, the former rather rarely. For example, they attribute to a miracle the fact that the sea retreats and advances at definite intervals, that springs well up, that the sun rises and sets, fire burns, water cools.[17]

Nor is it proper for anyone to have a less exalted opinion of God's inscrutable nature because Divine Scripture, in speaking to us in the simple language we use with children, attributes eyes, ears, hands, arms, and other human limbs to God, or because it attributes to him the human emotions of anger, hatred, regret, or because it designates him sometimes with words for created things, such as when it calls him 'sun' or 'stone' or 'lion,' which we discussed in the previous book. All things are properly denied of God; nothing is properly predicated of him, even when he is called 'life' or 'mind' or 'father' or even God, if we believe Dionysius.[18] And his ineffable majesty, as far as it is right for man, is believed through faith rather than understood, but also in that mystical hush where all the images of human understanding fall silent. As someone said, 'One understands by believing, interprets by worshipping.'[19]

Again, if we hear that God's nature is distinguished by three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, this does not impair its utter simplicity, because the three have one and the same indivisible essence and God is accordingly one; for something that is simply the highest should be one.[20]

The person of the Father is called invisible[21] because we do not read of him ever appearing in any visible form, while the Son appeared in a human

* * * * *

16 Gen 19:24–5. For the term Asphaltites, see Pliny *Naturalis historia* 7.15.65.

17 Cf Cicero *De natura deorum* 2.37.95–67.168.

18 Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names* 114–15 (596A–C). For the *via negativa* and apophatic tradition of mystical theology, see book 2 705 and n1243 above and 1067 n242 below. Among Erasmus' many contemporaries who commented on Pseudo-Dionysius was Martin Luther's antagonist, Johann Maier of Eck (John Eck), who was also highly critical of Erasmus; see his *D. Dionysii Areopagitae De mystica Theologia lib. I. Joan. Eckius Commentarios adiecit pro Theologia Negativa Ingolstadij. Augustae Vindelicorum* (Augsburg: Johann Miller 1519). See 'Johann Maier of Eck' CEBR I 416–19.

19 Author unknown.

20 See *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 258–65: 'For what is absolutely the highest cannot be other than one!' (265); Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 3 *De Dei simplicitate* (On the Simplicity of God).

21 Cf Col 1:15.

body assumed upon the same person and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove[22] and of fiery tongues,[23] though it did not assume them as the Son assumed human nature but only to provide a sign; and so the person of the Father is the most simply simple. The person of the Son consists of three natures:[24] a divine one that he shares with the Father and the Holy Spirit, a human soul, and a human body; for thus it was easier for him to be a mediator between God and man. So, the Father, whose authority is highest, redeemed the church through the Son; he governs it through the Holy Spirit.

Though God lacks for nothing, nevertheless he created everything because of himself, inasmuch as the end of all created things is to know and glorify their creator;[25] therefore he also presides in all the hierarchies, but not in the same way.[26]

In the heavenly hierarchy he presides and employs the angels as his ministers; he is celebrated and glorified there without cessation by the harmonious voice of all.

In the ecclesiastical hierarchy he presides and employs his angels, that is, the bishops, preachers,[27] and doctors. Moreover, this one aspires to that heavenly Jerusalem[28] and imitates it with all its might, contemplating the face of God through faith and glorifying its prince with hymns, frequent if not constant, though here sometimes our melodies are commingled with sighs and tears and are interrupted by various other necessities.[29]

He presides in the political hierarchy as the author of external good as well, using good magistrates for public tranquillity, using bad ones for his own purposes. In this too there is an image of that heavenly hierarchy, though less clear and cruder, as it were.

He presides in the hierarchy that we have called monarchical as the creator and governor of the universe, in which even things that lack voice express by their very appearance the power, wisdom, and goodness of their creator. For according to the words of the Gospel, he feeds the little

* * * * *

22 Matt 3:16; John 1:32
23 Acts 2:3
24 'Three natures' is somewhat unusual, but Erasmus explains this idea here and earlier in book 3 988.
25 Cf Rom 1:21; see Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 8 a 3 corpus. See also Thomas à Kempis *De stricto dei iudicio ubi accusabunt nos omnes creaturae* in *Sermones ad novicios regulares* (6.2.16) in Thomas à Kempis 129–33.
26 Cf Pseudo-Dionysius *The Celestial Hierarchies*.
27 Erasmus understands 'preachers' (*prophetae*) as 'prophets'; see book 1 CWE 67 322.
28 Rev 21:1–22:5; Heb 12:22. See Erasmus *Querela pacis* CWE 27 304.
29 Cf 2 Cor 6:4, 12:10.

sparrows,[30] he clothes the lilies,[31] he commands his sun to rise,[32] he pours down the rain to make the fields fertile.[33] In fact, even hell and the troops of impious spirits speak of his unconquerable power that no one can resist,[34] his truth in promises, his justice in rewards, his goodness towards those that he has mercifully preserved from such great evil and chosen for such great felicity.

Finally, he presides individually within the hearts of pious people through his spirit, consoling them in afflictions, strengthening them in temptations, perfecting them with spiritual gifts,[35] and he is praised when thanks are offered to him for happiness and sadness alike.[36] Moreover, just as the whole world is like a single living creature,[37] so an individual man is like a small city or a small church. What the bishop is in that, reason is here; what the congregation is there, the affections are here.

All these polities to some extent reflect the image of that heavenly one in which there is perfect order and perfect concord.[38] We have therefore four persons: the Father, creator and author of everything as a kind of supreme source, the Son the Redeemer, the Holy Spirit the governor, and Christ's body the church. For though Christ and the church are in a way a single person, nevertheless it is more convenient for teaching purposes to distinguish them. Nevertheless, all of these have a single purpose, for just as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one by nature, so those who are

* * * * *

30 Matt 6:26; Luke 12:24
31 Matt 6:28–9
32 Matt 5:45
33 See Deut 11:10–14, 28:12; Job 5:10; Jer 5:24; Matt 5:45.
34 Cf Matt 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39.
35 'Spiritual gifts' (*charismata spiritualia*); cf 1 Cor 12:31. See *Annotationes 1 ad Corinthios* 12:31 ASD II-8 248.
36 Cf Thomas à Kempis 234: 'Dress me in white garments, instruct me in holy ways with faith, hope and the love of God; strengthen me within that I might advance in true virtues, weeping in sad times and rejoicing in glad times and always giving thanks for all good things done for the honour of God, so that in each and every thing God might be blessed, praised, and greatly exalted forever. Amen.'
37 See Quintilian 5.14.12, where he uses this idea to demonstrate forms of the *epicheireme*: 'All animate things are better than inanimate, but there is nothing better than the universe, wherefore the universe is animate [*mundus igitur animal*].' See also Seneca *Naturales quaestiones* 3.29.2; Augustine *De civitate Dei* 4.12, 13.17.
38 This theme, expressed fully below, is central to the *Ecclesiastes* as it is to the entirety of Erasmus' work.

Christ's members through faith and charity are assumed through him, as far as possible, into the unity of the Trinity;[39] hence we have here an example of perfect concord.[40]

Now we must come to contraries. To God as monarch is opposed the Prince of Darkness – not a king but a tyrant – whose malice God uses for exercising the chosen and punishing the impious. Moreover, just as God is the source and author of all good, so Satan is the prince and father of all evil: not because there are two supreme principles, as the mad doctrines of the Manichaeans[41] had it, or because any substance is inherently evil, but because just as Satan himself, though good when created by God, degenerated into evil by his own perverse will, so he vitiates and corrupts as far as he can the other things that have been well created by God. In addition, though he is one, he nevertheless reflects the three divine persons in a different manner. The Father created all good; Satan corrupts all creation as far as he can.[42] And just as the former has angels whose service he uses for the salvation of mankind, so the latter has impious demons through which he entices mankind towards sinning.[43] The Son redeemed the fallen human race; Satan dragged the first men into ruin and strives every day with all his might to drag them back into slavery after their redemption. Likewise, just as Christ is the head of the church,[44] so Satan has his own members and his own body over which he rules. Now, just as the Holy Spirit purifies the hearts of mortals through faith in Christ, so Satan taints human minds through unbelief and

* * * * *

39 For the mystical body of Christ, see Eph 2:13–22; Col 2:8–15. The final perfection of the members of the mystical body of Christ represents the goal and purpose of God's creation, when in the end all are one in Christ and so fully assumed with him into the perfect Trinitarian unity with the Father and the Holy Spirit. In the end all creation shall have been reordered in the unity of the Word in perpetual peace and concord.

40 Erasmus takes up the theme of concord below.

41 The Manichaeans, a sect to which St Augustine once belonged, believed in a universe controlled by two supreme contrary powers, one good and the other evil. See Augustine *Confessions* 5.3.6 and his many writings against the Manichaeans; see CSEL 25/1 and 2; NPNF 1st series 4.

42 Cf Augustine *De trinitate* 4.13 for the devil as 'that deceiver ... who was a mediator to death for man, and feignedly puts himself forward as to life ...'

43 See *Querela pacis* CWE 27 294. See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia q 109 a 2 (*De ordinatione malorum angelorum*); and for this idea in the Fathers of the church, see Jeffrey Burton Russell *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition* (Ithaca 1981).

44 Eph 1:22, 5:23; Col 1:18

rebellion.[45] Again, the supreme power to save belongs to the Father, the supreme wisdom to redeem belongs to the Son, the supreme benevolence in guiding to the Holy Spirit. In Satan there is the supreme power to harm, were he not restrained by God's will; likewise, instead of supreme wisdom he has supreme cunning to destroy and supreme malice to lead astray and disturb good order. The Spirit glues and holds everything together;[46] Satan dissolves and scatters everything that he can.

Law

In addition, in every well-ordered state the chief authority rests with the laws; the more equitable these are, the better the condition of the community. The next place, therefore, will be devoted to divine law, than which nothing is more just, nothing more holy, nothing more beneficial. The best was given by the best, just as the worst laws come from Satan, in diametrical opposition to the divine laws. This is the law of the flesh; sin is its attendant, death its wages.[47]

The word 'law,' moreover, is understood in many ways in the mystical texts, sometimes as part of the Law that deals with types and ceremonies, as in the Gospel, 'Law and the prophets up to John.'[48] For the precepts of the Decalogue were not made obsolete by Christ;[49] but just as it calls 'the prophets' not all the writings of the prophets (which contain many evangelical precepts) but only the predictions about the coming of Christ, which ceased just as a promise ceases when what was promised has been fulfilled, sometimes it is used for the precepts that threaten punishment against a violator, of which Paul says, 'The law works anger.'[50] And elsewhere he calls this the law of works, to which is opposed the law of faith or law of grace, which freely promises justification through faith in Christ.[51] God's will is the surest measure of the honest and dishonest. He expressed this will of his to us through the canonical Scriptures, whose authority is inviolable.

* * * * *

45 Cf Heb 2:2; cf Thomas à Kempis 6 164 (*Sermones ad novicios regulares* pt 2 sermon 19); Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 164 a 2 corpus.
46 Cf Eph 4:12–16.
47 Rom 6:23
48 Luke 16:16; Matt 11:12–13
49 Matt 5:17–18
50 Rom 4:15, 3:27; see *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 29–30.
51 Rom 3:21–8

Moreover, this whole body of Scriptures is sometimes called the divine law, embracing the books of both Testaments. Moreover, just as John the Baptist marked the conclusion of the Old Law, in so far as it concerned the part that, as we have said, no longer applied, and the beginning of the New, so the Catholic Epistles of the apostles put an end to the New Testament,[52] for this is the extent of its irrefutable authority; everything else must be interpreted judiciously and examined in accordance with the divine rule.

God's law is always the same, just as God's will is immutable. Nevertheless, it has been displayed in a variety of ways, taking account of differences in times and persons. As far as man is concerned, four times should be examined: his creation, his fall, his restitution, and his perfection.

When created, man was given a law: 'Do not eat; if you eat, you will die on the spot,'[53] just as the angels at their creation were given a law to serve their creator and fell beyond recovery when it was violated.[54] And Satan's law began to conflict with divine law immediately in Paradise: 'Eat; if you eat you will not die but will be as gods.'[55] Here man first experienced to his great cost that Satan is a liar,[56] God truthful;[57] and at the same time he learned what it is to neglect God's law and to follow Satan's laws.

The second time is that of banishment,[58] in which men lived for many centuries without fixed laws but only by the law of nature, which was not yet so greatly obscured by vices as it became with the progress of time; nor did this law lack God's grace, supplying to the pious whatever their nature might lack.[59]

* * * * *

52 The Catholic Epistles are the seven Epistles written by James, Peter (2), John (3), and Jude.

53 Gen 2:17

54 This story of the fall of the angels is not recounted in Genesis but is long established in patristic tradition; see eg *De civitate Dei* 11–12, where Augustine discusses the creation and fall of the angels. See also *Paraphrasis in Marcum* CWE 49 18; and Jeffrey Burton Russell *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition* (Ithaca 1981).

55 Gen 3:5

56 John 8:44

57 Rom 3:4

58 This is the period after Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden in Gen 3:23–4.

59 In this period after Adam and Eve's expulsion from Eden certain 'pious' individuals served God and received their reward. Erasmus does not say whether certain pagans (eg Socrates, Virgil, Horace) might be included among them. See Chrysoglottus' and Nephalius' remarks in *Colloquia* (*Convivium religiosum*) CWE 39 194.

Moreover, the law of nature has a very broad application.[60] In fact it has force in all created things, even in what lacks sensation or reason, just as the heavenly bodies have performed their prescribed duties for so many thousands of years. The seas, rivers, springs, plants, and every kind of animal each obey the laws of their own nature because they lack free will. Only the angels and man, because they have been given free will, have fallen by their own fault,[61] not their creator's, for they turned to their destruction what had been given to them for the increase of their happiness. But if the rest of creation ever seems to have forgotten its laws – that is, when the sun is covered by the interposition of the moon or by thick clouds and withdraws its light, when mortals meet plagues that arise from an unlucky concurrence of stars, when the sea passes its limits and floods towns and cities, when the air that has been given for our life brings death with its pestilential breath, when animals that have been subjected to man's control attack men – these things arise undoubtedly from the fact that everything has been vitiated in some way or other through man's sin and groans and suffers together with man awaiting the revelation of the sons of God, as the Apostle teaches;[62] and yet creation does not depart from divine law when it rages against men because it does so at the will of the creator by whom it is governed.

After this, as mankind's wickedness increased and the law of nature was nearly obliterated, there succeeded the Law given through Moses to show explicitly what was wrong, what right, and to use punishment to deter from the former, rewards to encourage proper behaviour.[63] For the common people used to think that they were allowed to worship a variety of gods that mankind's superstition had fashioned in the same way that it also fashioned a variety of rituals, but Moses' law declares, 'You will worship one God'[64] and worship with these rituals. Someone who had been injured thought that he was permitted to kill his enemy, but the Law protests, 'You

* * * * *

60 On the law of nature (*lex naturae*), see eg Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.13.30; Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia IIae q 94 aa 1–6.

61 See especially Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 63 a 1 rep ob 2; see also I qq 63–4.

62 Rom 8:19

63 Preachers employ the same method to deter sinners from vice and encourage them to virtue; see book 2 passim. These themes also lie at the core of Franciscan preaching: 'vices and virtues, punishment and glory'; see 'The Later Rule' chapter 9 in *Francis of Assisi* I 104–5: Francis' rule uses the term 'glory' (*gloria*) instead of 'reward' (*praemium*).

64 See Exod 20:3, 20:22–6.

will not kill';[65] the Law, not man, will avenge the offence.[66] Likewise, those who were passionately in love had convinced themselves that they were permitted to do what they liked; the Law protests, 'You will not commit adultery,' 'You will not commit theft,' 'You will not covet another's property.'[67] Man's nature has been confined by these bars to keep it from slipping into every impiety.[68]

But in these last times,[69] after human impiety had turned even this gift of God into material for a graver condemnation, the law of the gospel was given in order to grant salvation through faith and grace;[70] we soldier under it with the aid of Christ until victory is won, and we are taken into heaven for an everlasting triumph.[71] In heaven there is no unhappiness that struggles against God's law, no rebellion.

The author of all these laws is God, but the minister of the Old Law was God's servant Moses. Christ, as man, is minister of the New Law; as the Son of God, he is its author. No other law is expected after this one, only the final judgment and the consummation of the world. The dispensation of all the ages looked towards Christ, who is the power and perfection of all the laws,[72] but under the law of nature the Son was almost unknown, the Holy Spirit more unknown. The law of Moses suggested both rather than proclaiming them, sketching them in shadowy outline and through figures, revealing them through the oracular predictions of the prophets, but as though from afar and through a mist. But Christ at his coming scattered all the mists like the sun and revealed all truth both through himself and through the Holy Spirit, showing what was hidden beneath the covering of the letter and openly displaying what the Law had designated with types, what the prophets had promised under wrappings.[73]

The Old Law is composed of narrative, precepts, types, ceremonies, and promises. Though ceremonies are types, it is not conversely true that

* * * * *

65 Exod 20:13
66 Cf Exod 21:12–27 for the penalties imposed upon those inflicting bodily injury on others; see also Rom 12:19–21 and *Enchiridion* CWE 66 123–6.
67 Exod 20:14, 20:15, 20:17
68 Cf 1 Tim 1:8–11 and Rom 2:12–29.
69 Cf 1 Pet 1:20.
70 Cf Rom 4:15, 6:14; Gal 3:13; and *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 31–2.
71 This of course is the central theme of the *Enchiridion* CWE 66 1–127.
72 Rom 10:4
73 Erasmus reiterates his teaching on the spiritual meaning of the letter of the Old Testament; cf book 1 CWE 67 316. See also Augustine *De catechizandis rudibus* (*On Catechizing the Uninstructed*) 4.8 CCSL 46 128–9; NPNF 1st series 3 287.

whatever is a type is a ceremony. For instance, the bronze serpent[74] or the water flowing from the rock was a type,[75] not a ceremony; but a holocaust was a ceremony of such a kind as could equally be a type.[76] No one would know with certainty that the world had been created by God as it is if the story in Genesis had not explained it.[77]

Precepts are of two kinds. Those that prescribe rules for morals and piety are eternal; those that prescribe ceremonies have been abrogated according to the letter but they have not been abrogated according to their spiritual meaning. For we are not commanded to make whole burnt offerings but we *are* commanded to offer ourselves wholly to God's will;[78] and we are not forbidden to eat swine, but we *are* commanded to abstain from swinish affections; and we are not forbidden to eat eels, but we *are* forbidden to become involved in the slimy business of earthly affairs. Moreover, in place of the numerous ceremonies that the Jews had, some even seemingly absurd, a few sacraments have been given to the church,[79] such as baptism in place of circumcision and the partaking of the body of the Lord in place of animal victims.

The third kind of precepts is the judicial (for this is what St Augustine calls them).[80] For instance, the Old Law prohibits adultery without exception of persons,[81] yet only the wife is ordered to be stoned when caught;[82] no fixed penalty is established for a man. And to treat the husband's pain the Law has a grim remedy: it permits divorce to the man if something repellent in his wife offends him,[83] but to the woman no right of separation is granted. I think that the degrees of relationship in contracting

* * * * *

74 Num 21:6–9; cf John 3:14. See book 3 952 where Erasmus expounds the significance of this type; and *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 48.

75 Exod 17:1–6; Num 20:2–13

76 A holocaust meant a whole burnt offering; ie all parts of the sacrificial victim were immolated, leaving nothing for the priests to consume. Cf Exod 30:28, 38:1; Lev 1:1–17.

77 Erasmus refers to the story of creation in Genesis 1.

78 Cf Rom 12:1.

79 Cf Augustine *De vera religione* (*True Religion*) 17 [33] CCSL 32 187–260; WSA I-8 49–50.

80 See Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I II q 99 a 5 resp 1, especially I II q 104. Augustine uses the word occasionally but with no treatment of the subject.

81 Exod 20:14; Lev 18:20, 20:10; Deut 22:22

82 Deut 22:22; Lev 20:10. Chomarat (ASD V-5 325 266–7n) corrects Erasmus' error, for the Law prescribes that both the woman and the guilty man die. Erasmus might be recalling John 8:3–5 (the story of the woman caught in adultery).

83 Deut 24:1–4

marriage also belong to this kind,[84] and the permission to exact vengeance in kind,[85] and the punishments prescribed for specific crimes, and many other things, of which we see that some are preserved even today by Christians, some have been removed altogether, some eased, some altered, some limited, others conversely extended. The remedy for adultery that Moses had granted has been removed, just as (in addition to others) the law has also been abrogated that at Deuteronomy 22 orders the death by stoning of a girl whose husband has found is not a virgin on account of unchastity committed secretly in her parents' house.[86] The punishment for adultery has been mollified, the right of divorce limited with respect to causes and extended with respect to persons; for a wife now has the same right to divorce as a husband. What puts an end to marital intimacy while the marriage endures has been changed by the introduction of a new kind of divorce;[87] likewise, the church has limited the degrees of relation just as it has completely removed from deacons and priests the right of entering a marriage.[88] Here someone might say, 'Therefore one may freely remove, change, extend, limit in this sort of thing, in accordance with each person's judgment.' Not in the least: what the Lord or the apostles confirmed or changed must be observed as they prescribed. It is fitting to observe reverently what the public authority of the church has prescribed, especially in universal councils, and has been approved by public and long-standing observance, nor should one scorn the instructions that popes have given on just grounds for the public good.[89] Yet sometimes the limits that

* * * * *

84 Erasmus likely means the degrees of consanguinity as prescribed by Lev 18:6–18: 'None of you shall approach anyone near of kin to uncover nakedness.'

85 Cf biblical adages for vengeance in kind, such as 'Law of the talon,' 'Eye for an eye'; see Exod 21:23–5; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21.

86 Deut 22:20–1.

87 For Erasmus' position on marriage and divorce, see *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 203–438, especially Michael J. Heath's introduction to the work (204–13) and his 'Erasmus and the Laws of Marriage' in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Hafniensis: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Copenhagen, 12–17 August 1991* ed Rhoda Schnur (Binghamton 1994) 477–84.

88 See Erasmus *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 265, especially n180 and the references given by Michael Heath, especially Léon-E. Halkin 'Erasme et le célebat sacerdotal' *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 57 (1977) 497–511.

89 Erasmus' statement strongly suggests his submission to ecclesiastical authorities in many matters that had provoked bitter controversies in the last decades of his life, eg his views on marriage, celibacy, monastic life, etc. This is not to say that he had changed his own mind on these issues but that he suppressed

Augustine distinguished verbally in a didactic discourse are so close that you could scarcely distinguish them clearly, and it is most advisable not to depart rashly from the laws of Scripture. Of this sort are the things that pertain to kindness and fairness,[90] about the jubilee,[91] about not taking clothing from a widow as a surety,[92] about giving the clothing accepted for surety to the poor before the night-time;[93] about sending back from the front someone who has taken a wife and not known her,[94] or who built a house that he has not yet dedicated,[95] or who is fearful of heart;[96] likewise about not prohibiting those who want to gather the ears behind the backs of the reapers.[97]

Among the promises are some in which we have the same situation as in the instructions regarding ceremonies; for it is not appropriate to expect here a land flowing with honey and milk,[98] the slaughter of our enemies,[99] or dominion over all nations,[100] but we look forward to a heavenly land that has a firm and unshaken tranquillity, the mortification of carnal desires, and a spiritual victory over everything that opposes piety.[101]

The New Law is both a clarification and a summary of the Old. It consists similarly of narration, teaching, instructions, sacraments, the display of promises, grace, and the most perfect of all examples of piety. Nothing is more admirable, nothing more lovable, nothing more reliable than its narrative. It contains the origin, progress, and death of the Redeemer up to the Acts of the Apostles that St Luke reported for us. Its teaching explains openly what was wrapped in riddles in the Law, and it draws out

* * * * *

his own opinion for the sake of 'peace and tranquillity' within the church. For Erasmus' position on the sacraments, see his letter to Ludwig Baer (Basel, 30 March 1529), Ep 2136:201–31: 'There is no sacrament of the church that I have not always venerated, although I point out that the Fathers took up different positions on the subject of marriage' (208–10). For Ludwig Baer, see CEBR I 84–6; and Ep 2087.

90 Cf Deut 24:10–25:16.
91 Lev 25:8–22
92 Deut 24:17
93 Deut 24:12–13
94 Deut 24:7
95 Deut 20:5
96 Deut 20:8
97 Deut 24:19–22
98 Exod 3:8 and 17, 13:5, 33:3
99 Deuteronomy 7
100 See Deut 11:23, 15:6, 19:1, 31:3.
101 Cf Revelation 21 (the heavenly Jerusalem); and Augustine *De civitate Dei* 22.30.

the mystical sense hidden in the letter, which we could not perceive without an interpreter. For who would have been able to guess with his own powers that the bronze serpent or the stone flowing with water or Jonah released alive from the belly of the whale[102] prefigured Christ on the cross taking away the sins of the world,[103] or refreshing and washing the souls of the believers with his Spirit,[104] or rising again from the tomb after three days?[105] I leave undecided whether the gospel's teaching adds something to the Old Law, just as I also leave it to others to judge about the commandments; for there are serious men who think that, because more abundant grace has been added, all the more is demanded by the commands in the gospel. Others think that nothing new is demanded, that what the Old Law instructed is only repeated more fully; but the gospel is quite sparing in these matters, emphasizing instead what belongs to the Spirit and to grace and renders one truly pious.

Now, if we should understand ceremonies in general as every external form of worship, there is something revealed to the senses in the sacraments of the New Law as well, for water is seen and touched, oil is beheld, touched, and perceived by odour,[106] and words are heard. Moreover, some things that somewhat resemble the Jewish ceremonies were taken over by the ancient leaders of the church, such as rest on the Lord's day,[107] forbidding fasting on the same days on which Moses forbad it to the Jews,[108] and whatever other things there are of this kind that prevail not because the Old Law enjoins them but because they have been accepted by the church as handed down by the apostles. Some things are not indeed the same but are similar, such as the church's instructions about the inactivity on feast days, discrimination

* * * * *

102 Jon 2:1–11

103 John 3:14–15

104 John 4:13–14, 7:38–9

105 Matt 12:40, where Jesus reveals the spiritual meaning of the story of Jonah in the whale's belly.

106 See *Paraphrasis in Lucam* (Luke 24:27) CWE 48 240–1, where Erasmus understands anointing in the Old and New Laws as 'the oil of gladness,' a 'heavenly and spiritual anointing,' 'a sign of the spiritual anointing with which Christ was anointed ... "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me" [Isa 61:1].'

107 Deut 5:13–15: 'The Lord your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day.' See also ODCC 1433.

108 Erasmus might be referring here to the three ember days (Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday), recurring four times each year, on which fasting and abstinence was observed; but their connection with the Mosaic law is difficult to determine.

among foods,[109] the anointing and tonsure of priests, the forms and colours of vestments, in all of which Christian charity avoids offending the weak so far as it can,[110] though with the stipulation that it not nourish superstition immoderately.

Moreover, nothing has been promised in the Old Law that Christ did not exhibit with perfect clarity, except for what regards the progress of the church and the consummation of the world;[111] and, to make that exhibiting more certain, he himself deigned to show, frequently through himself, more frequently through the apostles, what type or what prophecy was fulfilled by what event. For instance at Luke 4, when the Lord had recited in the synagogue the prophecy of Isaiah, 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me, and has sent me to preach the gospel to the poor,' etc, he added, 'Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'[112] So also when John had related that the Lord's legs had not been broken, quoting from the Old Law, 'You shall not break a bone of him,'[113] he signifies that the whole theme of the paschal lamb had been a figure of Christ;[114] and in Acts, Philip the Deacon shows that the passage of Isaiah that the eunuch did not understand was fulfilled in Christ.[115] And Peter teaches the crowd that was astonished at the miracle of the tongues that this had been foretold by Joel,[116] just as he explains that the passage in the Psalms, 'You will not leave your holy one to see corruption,'[117] applies not to David but to Christ, whose lifeless body was in the tomb for too brief a time to be able to decay.

In fact, the New Law takes its name evangelium [good news],[118] by a *happy* turn, for what is *happier* than the 'news' that everyone's sins are

* * * * *

109 Erasmus is likely referring to the ecclesiastical prohibition against eating meat on Fridays and days of abstinence; see *Colloquia* (*A Fish Diet* / Ἰχθυοφαγία) CWE 40 675–762.

110 See Romans 14–15:6 and *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 77–84.

111 Cf Christ's promise about his being with his church until the 'consummation of the world' (Matt 28: 20).

112 In Luke 4:18–21; Jesus refers to Isa 61:1.

113 John 19:33–6 recalls Exod 12:46.

114 Exod 12:3–11 gives instructions for eating the lamb at the first Passover. Cf 1 Pet 1:19.

115 Acts 8:30–5 recites Isa 53:7–8.

116 Acts 2:16 recites Joel 2:28–32.

117 Ps 15:10

118 The English word 'gospel' means 'good news,' which is also the root meaning of the Greek, *euangelion* (εὐαγγέλιον). The Latin word *evangelium* is a transcription of the Greek. Erasmus gives the essence of this 'good news,' or 'philosophy of Christ.'

forgiven freely through faith in Christ, that the enmity that previously existed between God and mankind is undone, and that instead of an earthly Paradise, the kingdom of heaven is being opened up? Yet no one under the Old Law was pleasing to God without faith and grace, but all this was predicted more clearly and poured forth more abundantly and spread more broadly in the New.

The Old Law contained outstanding examples of virtues,[119] such as faith in Abraham, gentleness in Moses[120] and David (of whom the former interceded with God on behalf of his rebellious people, the latter so often spared Saul when he could have slain his enemy),[121] justice in Samuel,[122] obedience in Isaac;[123] but in Christ alone the perfect model was shown of all the virtues in whom there was no flaw or defect commingled.[124]

Many loci arise from what we have said: about the difference between the Old and New Law, about the sacraments in each, about the agreement between both and how far the Old was or was not abrogated by the New, about the authority of canonical Scripture and how far it extends.[125] Its authority rests upon the reliability of those by whom it has been promulgated.[126] Its first authors are Christ and the Holy Spirit, Moses and those prophets that

* * * * *

119 Preaching the virtues is central to heralding the Good News as this instructs character. Abraham is known above all for his faith (Genesis 22), a topic Erasmus dwells on at 1041–4 below.

120 Cf Exod 32:11–14.

121 Twice David deliberately refrained from killing Saul when he had the opportunity; see 1 Sam 24:1–23 and 26:1–25. See 808 above.

122 Samuel was appointed by God as 'judge of Israel.' Chomarat notes that there is no passage that presents Samuel as having the virtue of justice (ASD V-5 331 357–8n); but see Ambrose *De paradiso* (*Paradise*) 3.21 CSEL 32 278; FOC 42 299; Augustine *De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum* (*To Simplicianus on Diverse Questions*) 2.3.2 CCSL 44 84.

123 Gen 22:6–10

124 This is central to Erasmus' philosophy of Christ and teaching on preaching: Christ is the model par excellence of all the virtues, and it is he whose example should instruct all Christians intent on piety.

125 Erasmus states a fundamental principle that Scripture is wholly consistent with itself and that if it appears contradictory, the problem lies with the reader, who needs guidance in reading it. This principle is a foundational element for the authority and divine origin of Holy Scripture and its teachings, and imparts certainty. At the same time, however, Erasmus' scheme here below gives greater priority to some works over others; those works of highest ranking 'are approved [above all] by the witness of Christ, then the apostles, martyrs, and confessors.'

126 Ie the apostles and their successors, the apostolic succession.

are approved by the unanimous consent of all and (more importantly) by the witness of Christ, then the apostles, martyrs, and confessors who have strengthened the faith by their writings or by their disdain for all earthly things, plus the miracles so obvious and so numerous that they leave no room for doubt. In addition there is the agreement of the Scriptures among themselves:[127] the New Testament is in harmony with the Old, and the whole of Scripture is so consistent with itself in all respects that there is never any conflict anywhere so long as it is understood correctly – something that is found in no human philosophy. Add the tone of certainty, for Scripture does not question or doubt, as philosophers do when they argue over their various theories: whether the world was created, whether the soul survives after the body's death, whether God cares about human affairs.[128] But Scripture makes sure and definite pronouncements about everything that needs to be known.[129] Add to these[130] the consensus of so many ages and so many nations; for no philosopher has written so precisely about matters divine and human as to earn the concordant assent of even a single region or city, while throughout the whole world so much honour and so much reverence is accorded the Scriptures that countless thousands of men and women have not hesitated to submit to torture and death of every kind because of their faith in them; for even the impious revere the majesty of Scripture, and so,

* * * * *

127 'Agreement of the Scriptures among themselves' is another fundamental exegetical tenet that Erasmus emphasizes repeatedly; see eg *Paraphrasis in Lucam* 24:27 CWE 48 234, where the resurrected Jesus in speaking to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus 'compared all these passages [Moses, the prophets, something from every book of Divine Scripture] with one another in such a way that the matter was perfectly clear.'

128 This position was held by the Epicureans who believed in the existence of the gods but not in their concern for human affairs. See Cicero *De natura deorum* 1.16.43–20.56. See also 'Epicurus' OCD 390–2.

129 'Everything that needs to be known' implies not only a correct understanding of Christian teachings but an understanding of all essential doctrines necessary for salvation. This phrase (*de omnibus quae cognitu necessaria sunt*) will be echoed in the decree on preaching from Trent (*ea, quae scire omnibus necessarium est ad salutem*). See Tanner II 669.

130 In scholastic fashion Erasmus lines up diverse arguments for the divine authority of Scripture, which is demonstrated by its authorship, historical continuity, internal consistency and harmony, clarity in pronouncements, miracles, affect on readers, universal consensus, the reverence with which it is held, inerrancy, etc. At the heart of his arguments lies the conviction that the universal 'concord' that results among those who believe is the surest sign of its authentically divine origin.

when hard-pressed by its authority, they tend to take refuge in spurious interpretations. Finally, it is confirmed by its effect or by its power, for no human writing so seizes and transforms the whole man when it is promulgated in simple language, neither commending itself with the subtlety of worldly philosophy nor beguiling human ears with rhetorical allurements. As the colophon I shall add that no other teaching is more in agreement with nature than Holy Scripture; for what is more in accord with nature than for the creature to submit himself completely to his creator? Nature spontaneously seeks the preservation and perfection of itself;[131] obedience to the Scriptures truly provides both. By nature all things desire the greatest good and happiness; only divinely inspired Scripture teaches both.

Another locus comes to mind: an examination of the meanings of the Scriptures; I think that I have said enough about this in the previous book.[132]

But since the Law sometimes gives rise to sin or makes it worse by providing an occasion,[133] and sin gives birth to death, here a locus comes to mind about the two kinds of sin and about the two kinds of death. The word 'sin' embraces every type of the vice, whose variety is endless.[134] To the vices are opposed the virtues[135] – a list of the outstanding ones should be drawn up.[136] Among these faith, hope, and charity, which some call 'heroic,' hold first place.[137] There are many things to be considered concerning these,

* * * * *

131 See eg Thomas Aquinas *In II Sententiarum* dist 34 q 1 a 2 sc 2; *Summa contra gentiles* 4.86.5; *Summa theologiae* I q 48 a 1 corpus.

132 Cf *Summa theologiae* I q 6 a 1 ad 1.

133 Cf Rom 7:7–13; *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 40–5.

134 Cf *Enchiridion* CWE 66 126, where Erasmus again gives up this endless effort: 'You see, my dear friend, what a vast sea of vices still remains to be discussed.'

135 Erasmus refers to the classification of sins as either mortal or venial. His scheme envisions an eternal opposition between vices and virtues that runs through all the orders of creation.

136 Erasmus makes this recommendion in *De copia* CWE 24 636–9: 'But each person should draw up a list of virtues and vices to suit himself, whether he looks for his examples in Cicero or Valerius Maximus or Aristotle or St Thomas.'

137 Thomas Aquinas calls these the theological virtues; see *Summa theologiae* Ia IIae q 62 aa 1–3: 'Such like principles are called "theological virtues": first, because their object is God, inasmuch as they direct us aright to God: secondly, because they are infused in us by God alone: thirdly, because these virtues are not made known to us, save by Divine revelation, contained in Holy Writ.' The *locus classicus* for the idea of 'heroic virtue' is Aristotle *Nichomachaean Ethics* 7.1: 'Of moral states to be avoided there are three kinds – vice, incontinence, brutishmess. The contraries of two of these are evident – one we call excellence, the other continence; to brutishness it would be most fitting to oppose superhuman excellence, something heroic and divine.' See also

for example, what faith is,[138] the ways in which that word is used in the holy books, how manifold it is, to what part of nature it answers, why it occupies first place among the heroic virtues, what conflicts with it or what is akin to it, and finally the people in whom it has shone to an outstanding degree.

For faith is a firm conviction about everything that is necessary for salvation.[139] Sometimes it is used for the faith of someone who fulfills promises (thus God is called faithful because he does not deceive in his promises), sometimes for simple trust concerning God's promises (thus Abraham's faith is praised because he did not hesitate when commanded to kill his only son, in whom a numerous posterity had been promised to him).[140] Sometimes it is an assent that could subsist without hope and charity (thus, though they neither love it nor hope for it, demons believe that an eternal life has been secured through Christ for those who live piously; impious men believe many things in the same way). Sometimes the word faith embraces all these things together: a sure conviction about the things that the sacred Scriptures relate and teach, a confident trust regarding God's promises, and a total obedience by which a man submits himself completely to God's will.

Now, there is faith infused and faith acquired, faith in the past, present, and future.[141]

* * * * *

Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia IIae q 54 a 3 corpus; Ia IIae q 68 aa 1–2; IIa IIae q 6 a 1; IIa IIae q 159 a 2. See also 'Heroicité des vertus' DS 7 337–43.

138 'Faith' is used in Scripture in many senses; see eg Heb 11:1: 'Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen'; Matt 6:30, 8:10, 15:28, 17:19; Mark 4:40; Luke 18:8; Acts 6:7, 14:26. See 'faith' ODCC 595–6. For the senses of faith in Erasmus and their relationship to *pietas*, see Manfred Hoffmann 'Faith and Piety in Erasmus's Thought' *Sixteenth Century Journal* 20/2 (1989) 241–58; and his 'Erasmus: Rhetorical Theologian' in *Rhetorical Invention and Religious Inquiry: New Perspectives* ed Walter Jost and Wendy Olmsted (New Haven 2000) 136–63.

139 Erasmus repeats here the phrase 'everything necessary for salvation.' See 1040 n129 and book 4 passim for the core teachings of the faith.

140 See Gen 22:15–18. Chomarat correctly observes that God did not promise Abraham numerous descendants until after he had intended to carry out the sacrifice of Isaac; ASD V-5 333 408–9nn.

141 Erasmus distinguishes between infused and acquired virtues; for 'infused' faith, see n137 above. For 'acquired faith,' see Thomas Aquinas *In I Sententiarum prologus magistri* q 1 a 3 q.a 3 resp ad argum 1: 'Acquired faith is opinion fortified with reasons'. For Thomas' extensive treatment of faith, see IIa IIae qq 1–16. Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 6 a 1 corpus, where he affirms that faith is in us by divine infusion: 'Therefore faith, as

Moreover, it answers to the part in us that is called reason or understanding, through which we have knowledge and judgment; faith completes this dimmed natural power.

Pre-eminence is attributed to it because it is the doorway to salvation; for it is through faith that God bestows all else upon us, and without faith it is impossible to be pleasing to God.

Opinion and knowledge are akin:[142] opinion relates to the probable, knowledge to the evident. It is probable that baptizing infants was instituted by the apostles, yet someone who held doubts about this should not be condemned; many tenets of the scholastic theologians that cannot be proved clearly from the Scriptures should be understood with this restraint. But that the whole is greater than any of its parts is something that I do not believe but know, and if an animal is anything that possesses the power of sensation, I know that an ox is an animal; I have doubts about plants and sea anemones.

Its contraries are: the flesh,[143] which believes only what it sees, and truculent inquisitiveness; worldly philosophy, which believes only what is proved by human arguments; Jewish obduracy,[144] which distrusts God's words unless they have kept seeing miracles.[145]

Another locus suggests itself: what does true faith effect in us? Before all else it brings justification by the free remission of all sins and from this a calm and untroubled conscience, a clear knowledge of all things that are necessary to know,[146] an unshakeable trust in the canonical Scriptures, a

* * * * *

regards the assent which is the chief act of faith, is from God moving man inwardly by grace.'

142 On the distinction between knowledge and opinion, see Cicero *De oratore* 2.7.30: 'While art is concerned with the things that are known, the activity of the orator has to do with opinion, not knowledge.' See also Plato *Republic* 6 for the distinction between knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) and opinion (δόξα) in the allegory of the cave.

143 For Erasmus' construction of the flesh-spirit contraries, see *Enchiridion* CWE 66 41–3, 46–54, 218–19; Payne (2) 17–25; and especially Bruce Mansfield *Erasmus in the Twentieth Century: Interpretations* (Toronto 2003) 92–3.

144 'Jewish toughness' or 'hardness of heart' recalls Exod 32:9, 34:9; Deut 10:16, 31:27. See also Matt 19:8; Mark 10:5.

145 For 'seeing miracles,' cf John 4:48; see also 1 Cor 1:22–3: 'For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ Crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles.'

146 For the effects of faith in those who believe, see Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae qq 7–9. Among the duties of the preacher is to impart a 'clear knowledge of all things that are necessary to know.'

ready and honest obedience, a true fear of God, a religious veneration of the divine majesty, scorn for the world, love of heavenly things, unbroken strength of mind against all petty terrors, modesty in prosperity, self-hatred in wrongdoing, distrust of one's strength and merits, and sure trust in the mercy of God.

And here is yet another locus: things by which faith is nourished, by which it is weakened. It is nourished by frequent prayer, repeated thanksgiving, frequent partaking of the Lord's body, regular reading of the Scriptures and daily contemplation of the heavenly, and tireless acts of charity towards one's neighbour. On the other hand it is weakened by the things contrary to these and eventually dies.

Those in whom this virtue has shone forth will be noted more seasonably in the list.[147]

The opposite of faith is distrust or disbelief. The contraries of faith that we spoke of above fit this, and it produces various effects in us: it heaps up injustice (for through this even good works are bad) and it does not allow the conscience ever to have rest; it induces mental blindness; it renders everything doubtful; it holds doubts about the Scriptures if it does not scorn them altogether; it induces rebellion; it teaches scorn for God or fear conjoined with hatred; it teaches hypocrisy, superstition, and idolatry, love of the transient, neglect of the heavenly; it casts down the mind in adversity, renders it wanton in prosperity; finally, it makes a man exult in what is worst; it teaches a man to trust his own strength, to distrust God's mercy.

Hope is connected to faith and is more a part of faith than a different species, and sometimes the Scriptures speak in such a way that they seem to use 'faith' for trust and sure hope.[148] Thus Paul, speaking of Abraham's faith, says, 'Who against hope believed in hope,'[149] and in Hebrews, 'Faith is the substance of things to be hoped for.'[150] At Romans 8 he calls hope the expectation of good things that are not seen.[151] No one hopes for what he does not believe, but what is believed is not automatically hoped for; therefore the part of living faith by which we await what God has promised is called hope. This allows us never to grow weary here in sowing good works because we are sure that the time is at hand when we will reap eternal life,

* * * * *

147 See 1046–64 below.
148 For Thomas Aquinas' treatment of hope, see *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae qq 17–22.
149 Rom 4:18
150 Heb 11:1
151 Rom 8:24–5. See *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 49.

and not to be worn out in enduring ills because we know that these temporary afflictions are nothing compared to the future glory that will be revealed in us.[152] Opposed to hope is despair and rash presumption or confidence,[153] by which someone promises himself from his own spirit what he does not merit or by which someone hopes that he will achieve eternal happiness by his own power and without God's grace.

Charity is that by which we love God above all else as the highest good,[154] and we want to enjoy him and wish our neighbour well because of God.[155] For if we love our parents, wife, and children with a natural affection, it is not heroic charity unless at the same time we love them because of God, nor do we bear them true good will unless the goal of our affection is to assist them with all our strength to achieve eternal life. The two are so tightly connected that they cannot be separated. No one truly loves God who does not love his neighbour; no one truly loves his neighbour if he is without a love for God. Moreover, this virtue completes the natural power that is called will, by which we seek what is salutary and shun its opposite, in the way that faith completes understanding; for in these two lies the totality of human happiness so that man sees unerringly through the eye and light of faith what should be pursued, what shunned, and pursues through charity what faith has dictated. Faith begets charity; charity in turn

* * * * *

152 Rom 8:18. See *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 48.

153 For 'despair and rash presumption or confidence,' see Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae qq 20–1. In the theological virtues the contraries of hope are despair and presumption, but these are obviously not 'infused' as is the theological virtue of hope.

154 God is the highest good (*summum bonum*), who is loved in and for himself. Love for one's neighbour is 'good will' (*amor benevolentiae*) that desires everything good even for one's enemy for the sake of God. Its contrary is the self-interested love (*amor concupiscentiae*) that loves one's neighbour or family member for the good one can derive from it. Cf Matt 5:46–8. In the ancient world the *summum bonum* was the goal of ethical inquiry; in *De finibus* 4.5.14 Cicero called it the foundation of philosophy (*de summo bono, quod continet philosophiam*). For Augustine, it is God; see *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum* (*On the Morals of the Catholic Church, On the Morals of the Manichaeans*) 2.11.24 CSEL 90 109; NPNF 1st series 4 76: 'Summum bonum omnino et quo esse aut cogitari melius nihil possit, aut intelligendus aut credendus deus est, si blasphemiis carere cogitamus.' See also Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae qq 23–46.

155 The biblical texts on 'charity' or 'love' are numerous; Erasmus has in mind passages that recall Jesus' words, eg Matt 22:37, Mark 12:30, and Luke 10:27, which recall Deut 6:5, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.'

nourishes faith with good works,[156] as the gospel parable hints: the light of faith is extinguished in the lamps of the foolish virgins[157] because the oil of charity is lacking, for it frequently happens that bad character and persistence in sinning, if they do not extinguish faith, certainly render it less fervent, and in turn an increase in faith renders charity more eager. These are the two sources of all the virtues and good works that are the fruits through which a good or bad tree is known.[158] Faith is the root, charity the branches spreading all around, as it were, the fruits that the sap of the root nourishes, for whatever does not arise from these sources, even if it looks very much like piety, is either sin or, if it is not sin, does not contribute to true salvation. Moreover, because many troubles confront those who walk through the path of piety, hope has been added as a staff; when they struggle, it supports them with the expectation of rewards so that they do not grow weary or despair even if a thousand deaths surround them.

What remains now is to assemble and arrange by loci a catalogue of all the virtues and vices.[159] I am not unaware that some others, including St Thomas Aquinas, have written at enormous length on these.[160] It would be easy for someone to excerpt from these writers anything that seemed appropriate and to arrange it in a list. As I indicated earlier, it would be better for each person to put together his own index of loci. We will take care to note the outstanding points rather than all of them, for the sake of the person who is deterred by this effort, so that we may seem to have assisted others' efforts rather than precluding them.

We have already indicated the wellsprings from which theology flows. Everyone knows the four sources of all virtuous action that the philosophers

* * * * *

156 Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 6, q 7 a 2, and q 65 a 4.

157 See the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, Matt 25:1–13.

158 Cf Matt 7:17–20.

159 Here Erasmus begins to assemble the 'catalogue of all the virtues and vices' that will occupy most of the remainder of book 4.

160 Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae, especially qq 1–170. Thomas left little unsaid on the subject of vices and virtues. Although Erasmus does not always acknowledge his sources, he seems to follow Thomas closely in book 4 when discussing the virtues and vices, as he explicitly states here; see also his Ep 858 to Paul Volz, Basel, 14 August 1518: 'Who can carry the *Secunda secundae* of Aquinas round with him?' (67–8). Just above he gives Aquinas and some others credit for 'defin[ing] everything truly and correctly,' which he attenuates somewhat with the words 'not to mention the tedious and frigid style in which they deal with these questions ...' See CWE 6 74 n67, which mentions that the work was 'often published separately as an authoritative manual of ethics.'

have acutely discerned: prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance – for all the species can be referred to these genera.[161] Prudence corresponds to faith, justice to charity, fortitude to hope; temperance is a species of justice that teaches how much should be assigned to the affections, how much to the body, how much to the mind, as well as how much should be denied, and it agrees with faith and hope alike to the extent that it puts a rein on the desires, which because of the turmoil they produce frequently drown out the judgments of faith and slow the impetus of charity.

And so let the first compartment[162] be designated for *pietas* [devotion].[163] This term embraces every affection, adoration, and all the duties that we owe to those from whom we have received life; and so the highest piety is owed to God, to whom we owe whatever we are, the next to our homeland, the third to our parents and children, the fourth to our teachers and catechists (who are in a sense the parents of our minds), the fifth to those by whose kindness we have been saved from death or otherwise very grave dangers. All of these are categories of justice.

To the first species belongs that highest veneration that the Greeks call λάτρια [divine worship].[164] There is no created thing on which this can be bestowed. This worship should be observed not with the mind alone but with

* * * * *

161 Temperance, justice, prudence and fortitude are the virtues that come to be called 'the cardinal virtues,' beginning with Ambrose, bishop of Milan, although they were treated extensively by many writers in the ancient world such as Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero, whose writings on moral duty, especially his *De officiis*, appear to have influenced Ambrose greatly, especially his own work to which he gave the same title. For Ambrose's use of the term 'cardinal' for these four virtues, see *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam* CCSL 14 156 (5.62:669–72): 'Nunc dicamus quemadmodum in quattuor benedictionibus sanctus Lucas benedictiones sit octo conplexus. Et quidem scimus virtutes esse quattuor cardinales, temperantiam iustitiam prudentiam fortitudinem.' For the virtues, see 'Vertus' DS 16 485–97, and 'Virtus et Vices' DS 16 497–506. For Erasmus' treatment of the virtues in his literary and educational writings, see especially *De conscribendis epistolis* CWE 25 108–10.

162 'Compartment' (*nidus*); this is a classical meaning of the word 'a pigeonhole' – for storing documents. See L&S *nidus* II (b) B: 'A receptacle, case, for books or goods'; OLD *nidus* (4): 'A compartment, pigeonhole.'

163 Here Erasmus explicates the meaning of *pietas*, which he locates in the cardinal virtue of justice (cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* II–IIae qq 57–62 and q 101). For *pietas* in Erasmus, see John W. O'Malley's introduction CWE 66 ix–li; see also L.-E. Halkin 'La Pieté d'Érasme' *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 79/3 (1984) 671–708.

164 More correctly λατρεία 'service.' See Lampe for the extensive uses of this term.

the body as well, because God is the creator of the whole man.[165] Moreover, divine worship is centered first of all on him so that we think about him in a way that is worthy of him, revere him above all else, love him, glorify him above all else, obey him above all else, seek everything from him, not hoping for any true good from anyone else as though this were its source, and giving thanks in all things.[166]

Here occurs the locus about how widespread is God's charity and generosity towards the human race:[167] for their sake he created this astonishing fabric of the world, to them he gave his angels as ministers, from love of them he did not spare his own Son but handed him over to death,[168] etc.

Another associated locus concerns God's boundless mercy, forgiveness, and clemency towards us.

Scrupulousness in pledging and fulfilling an oath contributes to the same end.[169]

Contrary to piety is impiety, to which are closely related idolatry, an oath undertaken for frivolous reasons, perjury, blasphemy, grumbling in adversity, forgetting God in prosperity, malicious arts, fortune telling and whatever of this kind has either an obvious or a secret conspiracy with demons,[170] and finally heresy.[171] Moreover, I use the term heresy not for any error at all but for the willful malice that disturbs the peace of the church with perverse dogmas for the sake of some advantage.[172] In general, however, every crime is connected with impiety, for whoever commits

* * * * *

165 See Thomas Aquinas *In III Sententiarum* dist 9 q 1 a 1; *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae qq 81 and 84 on *latria*, q 103 a 3, where he distinguishes between *latria* and *dulia*, III a q 25 on the adoration of Christ, and qq 74–6 on the Eucharist.

166 Cf Eph 5:20.

167 For this locus, see Erasmus' *De immensa Dei misericordia* CWE 70 69–139, which is in fact a model sermon (*concio*) extolling this divine property. Michael J. Heath notes, 'It seems unlikely that this "sermon" was actually delivered before a congregation' (70 and 77 n1).

168 Rom 8:32

169 Ie to the honour of God.

170 Erasmus here and elsewhere expresses his belief that 'malicious arts' (*artes maleficae*) are practised and that persons consort with demons; see also *De immensa Dei misericordia* CWE 70 80–1. For Erasmus on witchcraft and magic as told him 'by most reliable informants,' see the letter to Antoon van Bergen (Paris, 14 January 1501), Ep 142:5–11; see also Chomarat *Grammaire* I 46–8; Tracy I 31 and 226.

171 Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 11; Erasmus lists heresy in the final position, even worse than witchcraft.

172 Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 11 a 1. Erasmus follows Thomas.

a crime is preferring some created thing to its creator and defecting from God to Satan, whence Paul too calls greed idolatry.[173]

Another locus will come to mind, which concerns the ingratitude of men towards God: this can be developed by making a comparison between the kindness, gentleness, and beneficence of God and the stubborn malice of men.

A question will arise about the various rites of divine worship, which are now largely different from those under the Old Law.

Likewise about the worship and invocation of saints and about the use of statues and images and about the superstitious worship of God or of the saints.[174]

Again, there will occur the locus of what it is to put God to the test.[175]

The second species[176] raises several questions: how much we owe to the land that bore us and to which we are indebted even for our parents, a land that trained us by good laws and for which we ought to seek death if circumstances demanded it; conversely, what a dreadful crime it is to wage war on our native land or to harm it in other ways, and how gratitude is best rendered to one's homeland, and, conversely, by what actions in particular our affection for our country is violated?

Connected to this is the locus about the Catholic church,[177] which is not only a single community but also a single body, for a Christian is not just a fellow citizen but also a brother to every Christian. Here one will treat how much reverence is owed to the church, conversely what great impiety it is to stir up rebellion and sedition against it.[178] The theme may be developed through comparison: how much tighter the bonds of the spirit are than those of nature.

* * * * *

173 Col 3:5; see also Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 94.

174 Erasmus often states that the true veneration of the saints consists in imitating their virtues. See book 2 35: 'Propose them for imitation rather than for praise.'

175 Cf Deut 6:16; Matt 4:7; Luke 4:12; *Annotationes in Matthaeum* ASD VI-5 126; CWE 42–50. See *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 71– 6.

176 'Second species,' ie of piety (under the cardinal virtue of justice). Erasmus' numbering refers to the species of *pietas*.

177 For Erasmus' understanding of the church, see ed Hilmar M. Pabel 'The Peaceful People of Christ: the Irenic Ecclesiology of Erasmus of Rotterdam' in Pabel 57–93; C. Augustijn 'The Ecclesiology of Erasmus' *Scrinium* II 135–55.

178 Erasmus often emphasizes obedience as well as reverence owed to the church as well as to magistrates; see especially *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 73–7: 'For just as God wished that there should be order among the members of his own body ... so in the whole commonwealth in which there are both good and evil, he wished that there be a certain order' (74).

There is a similar question about the honour due to kings and magistrates and the much greater honour owed to those who fulfil the offices of the church.

To the third species belongs the treatment of the ways in which one keeps the commandment that bids us to honour our parents[179] as well as the reasons for which it is right to neglect parents' commands, also what parents in turn owe to their children and how they should be educated.

The fourth treats the theme that those who only beget and nurture bodies are not true parents, that a much greater debt is owed to those who shape the mind,[180] such as those who use good laws, liberal studies, and sound instruction to train towards living well, but above all those who shape tender minds towards piety.[181]

On the other hand, one should develop the theme by saying that it is much more criminal to taint the minds of young men or girls with wicked arts or impious opinions than if parents should violently twist their children's bodies for profit or prostitute them or expose them even, a practice that no one does not abhor though it is commonplace.

The fifth will treat the locus that giving life to someone who did not have it and saving a life that would be lost for someone who has it are equal, but in fact the latter is more outstanding, for parents do not give life to children, because frequently in intercourse they do not even want offspring to be born or, though they do want this very much, it still is not successful. But a physician or a friend restores by his own effort and at risk to himself a life that would otherwise be lost. Here there will be added the locus about what great piety it is to convert an impious person to piety, such as a pagan or Jew to the Christian religion, or a heretic to the fellowship of the dove,[182] or someone who lives in the world to penitence and zeal for

* * * * *

179 Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16

180 For the importance Erasmus places on the parental duty of selecting the right person to educate one's children, see *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 303: 'How much more does he give who gives the means for living well than he who merely gives life. Children owe little gratitude to parents who are their parents only in the physical sense of the word, but have failed to provide them with the proper upbringing.' Cf Plutarch *Alexander* 7.1–4, 8.1–3, where he speaks of Alexander's admiration for Aristotle: 'He loved Aristotle more than he did his father, for the one had given him life, but the other had taught him a noble life' (8.3).

181 Cf *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 307–15.

182 'Fellowship of the dove' refers to the Holy Spirit, often depicted as a dove. See eg Matt 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32. See 1067 below.

a more upright life; of course this is greater than restoring the life of the body.

Among the things that we have mentioned so far, the obligations of an ideal charity are ranked according to certain grades, but Christian charity is not limited within these grades but extends far and wide even to mortal enemies, wishing to assist everyone, both the deserving and the undeserving, following of course the example of the supreme Father, who makes his sun rise upon the good and the bad and rains upon the just and the unjust,[183] and the example of Christ who died for his enemies and on the cross prayed for those by whom he was being killed and in addition was being assailed with the bitterest blasphemies.[184]

The remaining parts of charity, then, are situated particularly in the following: that we harm no one unjustifiably, help everyone that we can, and endure the wicked out of love of Christ or even correct them should the opportunity be given.[185] The obligation of charity often depends on a person's status, of which we have already spoken in part; for example, we owe more duty to a brother or sister or to those of our own household than to others, more to those who do a kindness than to those of no deserts, more to Christians than to heathens, more to those who live piously than to those who live impurely. Sometimes in accordance with necessity: one should assist a stranger whose life is at risk in preference to a friend who wants to change worn out clothing for better. The ranking in fact is taken from the genus of the things, of which some pertain to the body, some to man's outstanding part, the mind. There is also a ranking within each kind. To bodily necessity pertain housing, clothing, food, health, life, and their opposites – lack of a home, nakedness, thirst and hunger, disease, torment, and death; to the mind pertain learning, calm, piety, and their contraries – ignorance, affliction, impiety, which is the death of the mind. Moreover, it is a greater kindness to remove malice from the mind than to drive disease from the body, and someone who takes away a man's good reputation does greater injury than someone who filches his money; for his reputation is in a way a man's life, and calumny is a kind of murder.[186] Here arises the locus about the many ways in which we help or harm our neighbour. We help by supplying the needy with the necessities of life, the afflicted with consolation, the perplexed with advice, the errant

* * * * *

183 Matt 5:45
184 Luke 23:34
185 Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 33 aa 1–8.
186 Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 73 a 3

with teaching, the more seriously delinquent over whom we have authority with loving rebuke or even chastisement; and so the judge who punishes the guilty in grief and against his will performs an office of charity, as does the father flogging his son.[187] But one who supplies a lusty youth with money as the wherewithal for sinning is doing harm. A neighbour is harmed by an example of a pernicious life, just as he is helped by a good example.

Here there opens up the very wide field concerning kindness, generosity, parsimony, and squandering, likewise another about repairing the wrongs with which we have injured our neighbour. For some things, such as property, can be restored, some can be healed: for example, someone provoked by abuse can be placated with gentle words, and someone cast into grief can be restored to calm by consolation. Some can be repaired as best one can; for example, a reputation harmed by lies is restored to a certain degree by telling the truth. Others can be neither restored nor healed yet can be compensated to some extent, such as the theft of virginity or of life. If a woman who has been debauched is being married, the theft of her virginity is well compensated; if she is given in marriage with a dowry, the theft of her virginity has been compensated as best it can, and her reputation repaired.

Now with regard to the first level of charity, which is to harm no one, there are many loci concerning murder and theft, about plunder, loss, and injury, concerning adultery, concerning calumny,[188] concerning licit and illicit business,[189] concerning usury,[190] concerning good faith and bad, such as in concealing or blurting out secrets, about honesty in trade, about pretences and impostures in words and deeds, about what truth is, and what falsehood is and whether it is ever permissible and when the truth should be concealed;[191] finally every injustice, every impiety towards God, every injury to man are opposed to love both for God and man.

* * * * *

187 Erasmus harshly denounces corporal punishment, especially in monasteries (cf book 2 623); however, he does acknowledge the rare instance when it is justified, but then 'the [corporal] punishment should be humane and restrained.' Cf Prov 13:24 'Those who spare the rod hate their children.' Erasmus' contempt for institutionalized flogging is noteworthy; see eg *De pueris instituendis* CWE 26 326–33.

188 Erasmus repeats his idea that the effect of calumny (*calumnia*) is 'a kind of murder.' See 643 and 769 above; cf *Lingua* CWE 29 341: 'What a great scourge of human life is the slanderous tongue, that is, the truly devilish tongue.'

189 Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 77 aa 1–4

190 Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 78 aa 1–4

191 Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 69.

Moreover, the source of all vices comes from the fact that human weakness obeys the flesh more than the spirit;[192] therefore Christian temperance does not result in our dispensing with emotions altogether,[193] as certain Stoics taught,[194] but in conquering them and pursuing the things of the spirit. Temperance brings with it a most beautiful chorus of the virtues:[195] modesty, virginity, chastity, economy of speech, sobriety, honesty, simplicity, forgiveness, a perpetual and constant tranquillity of mind, and together with these the ornament of all actions, propriety.[196] On the other hand, intemperance brings with it an utterly repulsive herd: impudence, a hundred forms of immodesty, the trivial garrulity that the Greeks call ἀκριτομυθία [babbling],[197] luxury, drunkenness and sleepiness, covetousness, anger, revenge, greed, envy, suspicion, and countless other disturbances of the mind and, in addition to all these, the degradation of all actions, τὸ ἀπρεπές, that is, the inappropriate.[198]

* * * * *

192 Cf book 3: 'from the flesh through our innate proclivity towards vice.' Erasmus often addresses the Pauline idea of 'the flesh'; to counteract it, he offers as remedy that 'anger, hatred, and indignation are to be stirred not so much against persons as against the vices themselves and against Satan, the father of vices.'

193 On Christian temperance, see Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae qq 141–2. See also Cicero *De finibus* 1.47–8.

194 For the Stoic idea of emotions (πάθη) as diseases needing to be rooted out, see book 2 721 n1317 above. This describes Epictetus' method of dealing with the emotions in his *Enchiridion*. But Erasmus, like Cicero, distinguishes between the cruder emotions (*aegritudo*, *formido*, *libido*, and *laetitia* [*gestientis animi elatio voluptaria*]), labelled as diseases or disorders (*perturbationes animorum*) and good, milder emotions that can be stirred to do good; see *Tusculan Disputations* 3.4.7, 3.4.9, 4.4.8, 4.5.10, and book 4 passim; *De finibus 3.10.35*. See also Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 19.12, whose story of Herodes Atticus affirms the value of the emotions against the 'lack of feeling' of the Stoics. Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 142 a 1. See especially *Moria* CWE 27 104 and Tracy (2) 120–4.

195 Erasmus notes passim these virtues as the central topics for the preacher to dwell on.

196 Like Cicero and Quintilian, Erasmus repeatedly emphasizes the crucial importance of propriety (*decorum*, τὸ πρέπον), 'the ornament of all action': 'The universal rule, in oratory as in life, is to consider propriety' (Cicero *Orator* 21.71). See also Cicero *Orator* 20.69–22.74, *De officiis* 1.27.93–28.100 and 2.18.64; Quintilian 8.3.11–14, 11.1.1–93, 11.3.61–5; Aristotle *Rhetoric* 3.7.1–11 (1408a–1408b); and Lausberg §§258–9, 1055–62.

197 For ἀκριτομυθία, see Homer *Iliad* 2.246 (with reference to Thersites 'of reckless speech': ἀκριτόμυθε) and *Odyssey* 19.560, used by Penelope in addressing the disguised Odysseus.

198 For 'inappropriate' (*indecorum*, ἀπρέπεια), see Cicero *Orator* 21.71–3; *De officiis* 1.27.93–29.104; Lausberg §1074.

But because, as I have said, those who pursue piety must endure much that is troublesome and even frightening to human nature, one needs an unconquerable strength of mind and fortitude, not the one that philosophers dream of and promise themselves from their own natural strength but the one that divinely given faith begets in us and hope animates and charity arouses. There is nothing that the wicked spirits, which Paul calls 'the rulers of this world,'[199] do not plot against us. The flesh that, like it or not, we carry about with us tempts, the world attacks.[200] A thief or swindler snatches our resources, someone refuses to pay what he owes, another to return what was entrusted to him, a slanderer steals our reputation, a bully attacks us, a tyrant rages against free men or threatens torture and finally takes their life. No mortal enjoys such prosperity as does not leave him open to suffering; but in all of this, as the Apostle says, we overcome through faith and hope and the love we have for Christ Jesus.[201]

I think that I have covered to a large extent the principal types of virtues and vices.[202] That leaves for good people modesty[203] and a perpetual desire for spiritual progress, and in the lapsed a coming to their senses and repentence. Modesty precludes human boasting, which has a habit of tripping up even the perfect in the midst of their virtues. Zeal for advancing is necessary for two reasons,[204] either because whoever halts in the path of virtue is very close to the danger of relapsing or else because someone unwilling to become better than himself is not truly good, for nothing in this life is so perfected that it does not admit of an addition and increase of virtue. The ultimate end of an evil life is lasting despair; the ultimate end of a life of virtue is to fall asleep happily in the Lord[205] with a sure hope of the resurrection and a secure confidence in the mercy of God, in the merits of Jesus Christ, and in the grace of the Holy Spirit.

* * * * *

199 Eph 6:12
200 Rom 7:14–20
201 Cf Rom 8:31–9; 1 Cor 13:13; 1 Thess 5:8.
202 Below Erasmus gives a *sylva*, ie further material (or 'miscellany') for discoursing on the topic of virtues and vices.
203 See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 160.
204 Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* q 166, *De studiositate*; Erasmus uses the Latin word *studium* for 'zeal.'
205 For 'asleep happily in the Lord' (*obdormire in Domino*), see Acts 7:59 where after being stoned Stephen 'fell asleep' (*obdormivit*). Some Vulgate readings have 'fell asleep in the Lord' (*obdormivit in Domino*). See Thomas à Kempis *Dialogi noviciorum* 4.4 VII 244; Thomas of Celano *First Life of Saint Francis* 2.110 in *Francis of Assisi* I 278: 'His body fell asleep in the Lord.'

It remains for us to put together the divisions or headings out of what we have presented, and then to suggest by each one an outline for the preacher,[206] particularly from Holy Writ.

Headings

1/ God: what he is, his greatness, his nature in himself, and how he is distinguished in three persons. Akin to definition are the names[207] by which God is designated in Holy Writ and the etymology of each in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin; in addition, the ways in which God's name is used in Holy Writ.[208]
2/ The nature of God in created things.
3/ How he presides over each of the hierarchies: the monarchical, the heavenly, the ecclesiastical, the political, and the spiritual or personal.
4/ Who Satan is and the nature of his kingdom, or rather tyranny.
5/ Divine law and the things associated with it.
6/ What sin is and its many varieties.
7/ Faith, hope, and charity.
8/ The many forms of piety.
9/ The parts or degrees and ranking of love.
10/ The many voices of temperance.
11/ Christian fortitude.
12/ Modesty or humility and constant zeal for advancing.

* * * * *

206 Erasmus may have found this idea of a *sylva* as 'outline' in Cicero *Orator* 3.12: 'what may be called the raw material of oratory' (*quasi silva dicendi*); see also Quintilian 10.3.17; and Cicero *De oratore* 3.30.118: '"Those referring to conduct either deal with the discussion of duty – the department that asks what action is right and proper, a topic comprising the whole subject of the virtues and vices – or are employed either in producing or in allaying or removing some emotion. This class comprises modes of exhortation, reproach, consolation, compassion and every method of exciting, and also, if so indicated by the situation, of allaying all the emotions."' The list is elaborated below. See Erasmus' instructions in *De copia* for 'Assembling illustrative material' (CWE 24 635–48) where he explains how one can gather up 'an ample supply of examples, have them ready in our pocket so to speak.' Erasmus' method in *De copia* is very much the same as his approach in *Ecclesiastes* book 4 and, we might imagine, reflects Erasmus' own scholarly procedures. See CWE 67 228 n787.

207 Cf Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names* passim. Erasmus follows Pseudo-Dionysius closely in treating the divine names.

208 The term 'Holy Writ' (*arcanis literis*) is literally 'mystical books,' which Erasmus sometimes uses for Sacred Scripture; also '*mysticis literis*' (see 1097 below).

13/ Penitence and desperation.
14/ Christian death.
These, generally speaking, are the principal divisions of the subject. We will now divide them into their parts: divide them, I say, not chop them up. Anything that needs to be added will be included in the *sylvae*.

GOD'S NATURE OR ESSENCE.
Infinite and incomprehensible God of the whole of creation.
God supremely or infinitely powerful, wise and good.
God one and of one substance only.
What is proper to God the Father and what is attributed to him.
What is proper to the Son and what is attributed to him.
What is proper to the Holy Spirit and what is attributed to it.
Here will occur the locus that one must speak religiously and soberly about divine matters.
Likewise the locus: Against curious questions and rash definitions.

HOW GOD (SINCE THIS WORD EMBRACES THREE PERSONS) PRESIDES AND GOVERNS THE WHOLE OF CREATION, INCLUDING DEMONS AS WELL, TOGETHER WITH THE DAMNED, AND BRUTE ANIMALS AND INANIMATE THINGS.
Here will occur the locus about how God shines forth in all created things and is known from them.

HOW GOD PRESIDES IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL HIERARCHY,[209] WHICH IS THE CHURCH AND THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST.
Many loci belong here:
What the church is and how many forms it takes.
On whether the mixed church can err.
The number of the sacraments and the force of each.[210]

* * * * *

209 Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I qq 106, 108, 184.

210 Erasmus does not state the number of sacraments here, although he does in *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 339–443: 'Seven have been handed down to us by the ancients.' He gives the sacraments in the following order: matrimony, baptism, penance, confirmation, Eucharist, extreme unction, and ordination (CWE 70 340–1). Chomarat calls attention to the accusation against Erasmus for rejecting confession and the Eucharist as sacraments and Erasmus' response in his letter to Ludwig Baer of 1529; see n89 above.

Who the ministers are and what their function is.
The nature of the church's beginning, growth, and completion.

HOW HE PRESIDES IN THE POLITICAL HIERARCHY, AND HOW THE ONE DIFFERS FROM THE OTHER.
The loci of what are the duties of princes towards the state.[211]
To what extent they should be obeyed even if idolatrous.
On public concord.
On peace and war and the law of war.

HOW GOD PRESIDES OVER ALL THE SOULS OF THE DEVOUT.
The loci about the parts of man, which are body and soul.
The soul rules, the body serves, as in marriage.
Likewise, the powers of the soul: reason, appetite, and will.
Reason is king, appetite is often rebellious, will obeys reason – otherwise, there is internal war and sedition; conscience meanwhile is judge and executioner. Likewise, how it is that on account of this congruence things are often said about Christ in the Scriptures that pertain to his mystical body and, conversely, how[212] things in Christ that belong to man are attributed to God on account of the unity of person and vice versa.
Sometimes what squares with the entire church is adapted to individual persons.

WHAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AND ITS VARIOUS ASPECTS.
What the kingdom of Satan is, that is, of the adversary.
Whether there is any beginning of evil, and whether any substance is evil of itself.
Why the power to harm has been granted him.
How he reflects God's properties in reverse.
The nature of his body and its members.
How he was conquered by Christ and can be defeated by us.
The end of Satan's kingdom.[213]

* * * * *

211 Cf book 2 593; see also *Institutio principis christiani* CWE 27 199–288.

212 With 'how things . . . vice versa,' Erasmus describes the Christological *communicatio idiomatum*; see book 3 987 n1535 above. See also Grillmeier 1 336–7 and passim.

213 Erasmus' vision of creation pictures Satan and his devils as mirror opposites of Christ and his angels, although there is no 'substance' of evil per se that stands contrary to God. Evil, of course, being the privation of a good

Law[214]

The origin of the word 'law,' and what it is, and the many ways in which it is used in the Scriptures.
The difference between the law of God and the laws of mankind.
The violation of God's law in the angels gave birth to death and made a devil out of an angel.
The violation in Paradise of God's express law turned the innocent into the guilty, the happy into the wretched.
God's law is preserved in brute animals and inanimate things.
The law of nature inscribed in human hearts was nearly obliterated by the ever worsening proliferation of vices.
The inscribing of the law of Moses on stone tablets gave the Jews the opportunity to go astray, and so to provoke God's anger, and how they did so.
The things of which the Old Law especially consists.
The extent to which it has been made obsolete or not.
Of what the New Law consists, and where it surpasses the Old: miracles; a more sacred narrative; fuller, clearer, and surer teaching; more complete and more spiritual instructions; gentler but more efficacious sacraments; revelation of the promises in the Old; the loftiness of its promises; the wider and more abundant outpouring of grace; much more perfect examples.

HOW FAR THE INVIOLABLE AUTHORITY OF CANONICAL SCRIPTURE EXTENDS AND THE THINGS OF WHICH IT CONSISTS.
The undoubted good faith of its authors.
The agreement of so many ages and nations.
The approbation of Christ when he cited the Old Law.
Countless obvious miracles.
The life and death of the apostles, of countless martyrs and virgins.
The agreement of both Testaments.
The agreement of the whole of Scripture within itself.
The agreement with natural reason.
The certainty of its dogmas.
Its power or efficacy in transforming.

* * * * *

that should be present, therefore does not exist as a substance but is experienced in its effects. See 1044 above. See especially Gregory of Nyssa *Oratio catechetica magna* (*The Great Catechism*) 6–7 PG 45 (1863) 9–106; NPNF 2nd series 5 480–1.

214 See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia IIae qq 90–108.

The ways in which one arrives at a true understanding of the Scriptures.
How some are said to be free from the Law.

The Law of Satan[215]

The law of Satan is opposed to divine law in everything.
Tells false and impious things.
Deceives with trickery in place of miracles.
Corrupts sound teaching.
Teaches absurd and pestilential doctrines.
Uses pestilential sacraments to drag his initiates to their destruction.
Promises false good and entices into true evil.
Inspires madness instead of grace.
Abounds in the most pestilential examples.
By these means and allurements casts wretches into the death of hell.

Virtues and Vices[216]

The heroic virtues.
What faith is, and in how many ways it is employed.
What faith effects within us.
Why first place among the heroic virtues is given to faith.
Faith, compared to opinion and knowledge, is surer than either.
What falls under faith.

Opposites

The things that oppose faith.
Lack of faith.
Wisdom of the sensual world.[217]

* * * * *

215 Erasmus again depicts Satan and his forces as drawn up in ranks against God and his angels, giving us a vision of a hierarchy of devils under Satan, who imitates the cosmic structure that God had designed for governing the cosmos, church, society, and earthly polities. Although Erasmus does not dwell at length on the *eschata*, presumably at the end of the world this diabolical hierarchy will dissolve, and hell will collapse in total chaos.

216 For 'virtues and vices,' see 1055 n206 above.

217 See James 3:15: 'Wisdom of the sensual world' (*sapientia mundi animalis*). See Erasmus' words on this in *Paraphrasis in epistolam Iacobi* CWE 44 158–9, where he focuses his attack on the 'man-made philosophy [that] produces professors

Trust in one's own power.
Rebellion.
Grumbling and
Disobedience.
What hope is and how it differs from faith.
Despair and rash presumption are their opposites.
What heroic charity is and its varieties.
Comparison of charity and faith.
The various gifts of the Spirit.

ON THE VIRTUES IN GENERAL

What piety towards God is.
What adoration is, and how it is performed.
God's immense kindness and goodness towards us.
In addition there is the locus about scrupulously undertaking and faithfully fulfilling an oath.
Likewise about making and not making vows.[218]
How God is worshipped in the saints.
Invocation of the saints and what kind of use may be made of images.
What is the best worship of God and of the saints.
The various rites of divine worship.

THE OPPOSITES TO PIETY

Idolatry.
How in general there is idolatry in every crime.

* * * * *

who are captious, obstinate, and ferocious' (158) and the 'rivalry ... among the professors of worldly wisdom' (159).

218 Erasmus' ideas about the taking of vows centre principally on the psychological maturity of the individual who embarks upon the religious life. Although often sounding hostile to monks and the monastic life, he makes clear he has no animus against them or their way of life, but to the contrary he protests that 'there are none whom I revere more, nor would I more gladly live among any than among those who are truly dead to the world and live according to the Gospel's rule, were it not for the fact that my physical frailty renders me unsuited for any common life. If I sometimes warn young men not to enter precipitously into an unknown manner of life, while they are virtually unknown to themselves, if I censure monks who traverse sea and land to lure the naivety of youth cunningly into their snare, if I point out in what true religion consists, am I then attacking monks? I nowhere attack either the monastic order or calling.' *Responsio ad epistolam Alberti Pii* CWE 84 31–2. Erasmus has expressed the same sentiments above; see 603, 752, 906, 1015–16.

An oath rashly undertaken and perjury.
Blasphemy that is committed by deed as well.
Grumbling in adversity.
Forgetting God in prosperity.
Dangerous or curious arts.
Heresy.
Ingratitude towards God.
Superstitious worship of God and of the saints.
What it means to put God to the test.

DEVOTION TO ONE'S HOMELAND AND THE REASONS WHY WE OWE IT[219]

The ways in which one thanks one's homeland.
Conversely, those ways in which devotion to one's homeland is particularly violated.
Here comes to mind the locus concerning concord, peace, sedition, and war.
Likewise the function of kings, princes, and magistrates.
What the people owe to them in turn.
Associated with these is the locus about the church, which is the shared homeland of all Christians, and how much honour is owed to it and to its leaders.

DEVOTION TO PARENTS

How God's commandment about honouring parents is observed.
The reasons for which one may disregard parents' commands.
Duties of parents to children. Chief of these is a proper education.
Duties of children to parents.
Associated with these are the duties of husbands to their wives, those in turn of wives to husbands.
What is owed to other kin.

DEVOTION TO TEACHERS

Those who beget and shape the mind are more truly called parents than those that beget and shape bodies.
On catechists, bishops, and doctors.
On the church itself, which is the mother of believers.

* * * * *

219 Chomarat follows the original Latin editions of *Ecclesiastes* by not setting this phrase off as a separate subheading. Erasmus' list suggests it should have been, and the translators have thus emended it accordingly.

OPPOSITES

Those who taint minds with impious teaching are more criminal than those who twist or expose children's bodies.

DEVOTION TO THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN US LIFE

Giving life to someone who does not have it and saving someone who would otherwise die are equal.
In fact the latter is more excellent.
The locus about honouring physicians.
The comparison between physicians of the body and those of the mind.
There is nothing greater than converting a sinner.
If someone can save a dying person but does not, he kills him.

CHARITY IN GENERAL

What the priorities in Christian charity are: that we harm no one; that we assist those whom we can; that for Christ's sake we endure or even assist the wicked if we cannot correct them.
The locus about alms and generosity.
The ranking of charity towards one's neighbour and what a man owes himself.
The ways in which a neighbour is helped or harmed.
The ways in which a man harms himself.
Restitution by which we repair the ills that we have inflicted upon a neighbour.

RANKING OF CHARITY IN REVERSE

As opposites to the first and second ranks of charity they place murder, by which the life of the body is taken away.
Then calumny and disparagement and (closely associated with these) false witness, by which reputation is taken away.
Theft and its types, by which property is taken away.
Adultery, by which one robs a man of what is dearer to him than himself.
Murder committed not only with poisons and the sword but also with both tongue and mind.
Whoever has coveted another's wife is thereby an adulterer.
Someone who corrupts the soul is a spiritual adulterer.
Unfair charging and unjust trading come under the genus of theft.
Usury.
Reneging on a trust or a debt.
An obligation performed in bad faith.
Deception in contracts.

Fraud in promises.
What falsehood is, and whether it is permitted in any circumstances.

THE MANY FORMS OF TEMPERANCE

A sense of shame is the best guardian of innocence.
The locus about shame before men and shame before God who sees all.
Willing and true virginity.
Guarding virginity.
The duties of virgins.
The chastity of married people and of widows.
Comparison of these states.
Economy and grace of speech.
Constant sobriety and the extent to which the body should be worn down by fasts and other trials.
Friendliness, well disposed to all.
Ingenuousness, which entertains no rash suspicions.
Constant calmness of mind.
Modesty or humility.
Gentleness.
Politeness without fawning.
Appropriateness, the adornment of all actions.

THE MANY FORMS OF INTEMPERANCE

Shamelessness or intemperance.
Scorn for God, who sees everything, even the deepest recesses of the heart.
Forced and feigned virginity.
Illicit intercourse and other forms of lechery.
Shameful behaviour in marriage, even short of adultery.
The merry widowhood criticized by Paul.[220]
Trivial loquacity.
Luxury, idleness, somnolence, and inebriation.
Inebriation that comes from other affections.
Malice, which covets another's goods.
Readiness to suspect the worst.
A mind vacillating between various emotions.
Arrogance and amour propre.
Savagery, glumness, and implacability.

* * * * *

220 1 Tim 5:11–13

Harshness of appearance and character.
Flattery, which is most pernicious when someone is his own αὐτοκόλαξ [self-flatterer].
Indecorum or ἀπρεπές [*aprepes*], the disfigurement of all actions.

CHRISTIAN FORTITUDE
The difference between philosophical and Christian magnanimity.[221]
The types of nobility of soul: the first, which endures things harsh to the body, such as losses, exile, tortures, death, and takes no interest in the things that are contrary to these.
The second, which disregards things troubling to the mind – slander, infamy, injuries, and the like – and foregoes revenge.
The third, which through trust in Christ scorns Satan and whatever his power threatens.
Ills are not to be invited but are to be borne patiently when they occur; to what extent one may avoid persecution.
Whether truth is to be proffered everywhere and to what extent.
The moderation to be applied in punishing the guilty.
The limits to undertaking and waging war.
On the false image of magnanimity.
On the chain of virtues.

ADDENDUM
Constant zeal for spiritual progress.
Penitence timely and late.
Unwavering despair and corrupt understanding.
Christian death.

END OF THE LIST

Sylva

It remains for each person to put together an outline for himself for each of the individual headings. It will consist of reasons, confirmations, witnesses, especially those of the Scriptures, types and figures, solutions of questions, parallels, examples, amplifications, epigrams, proverbs, and things like these.[222]

* * * * *

221 See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 129 aa 1–8.
222 As Thomas has constructed his summa with such extensive treatments of these

The Nature of God

The nature of God cannot be explained in human language.[223]

He could perhaps best be described by saying, for example, 'God is the highest good,'[224] 'God is infinite virtue,'[225] 'God is that than which there can be nothing better or greater.'[226]

Only God truly is;[227] he exists unchangeably without time;[228] he is being itself;[229] and the fact that all created things somehow exist comes to them from him.[230] Exodus 3, 'I Am Who I Am, and ὁ ὤν [the one who is] sent me to you.'[231] In Revelation too he is sometimes denoted as ὁ ὤν,[232] and

* * * * *

loci, Erasmus does not need to duplicate the effort; but he encourages each preacher to make an inventory of topics for preaching: this should be a major duty of every zealous preacher.

223 See *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 13.

224 For the 'highest good' (*summum bonum*), see 1045 and n154 above. See also Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia q 6 a 2: 'Whether God is the highest good.' Thomas' question follows up St Augustine's *On the Trinity* 1.2.4 NPNF 1st series 3 19.

225 'Virtue' can also be translated as 'power' and 'excellence.' God is infinitely powerful, infinitely all powerful; God is of infinite virtue. See Hilary of Poitiers *De trinitate* 4.36 CCSL 62 140 (*aeternae videlicet et indemutabilis virtutis infinitatem in eo*); Thomas Aquinas *In I Sententiarum* dist 37 q 3 a 2 corpus (*Deo autem soli convenit in pluribus et in omnibus locis esse, quia ipse virtutis infinitae est*), *Summa contra gentiles* 3.68.3, *Summa theologiae* Ia q 7 and q 105.

226 See book 2 648 and n937 above. This definition of God also recalls St Anselm's ontological argument in *Proslogion* 15; see also Thomas Aquinas *In I Sententiarum* dist 3 q 1 a 2.

227 In Thomas Aquinas' theology God's essence is his existence; see *Summa theologiae* Ia q 3 a 4: 'And God therefore is his own being and not only his own essence'; and q 13 a 11 arg 2: 'This name HE WHO IS is most properly applied to God.' Erasmus' discussion of God in this paragraph illuminates the biblical expressions of this philosophical tenet.

228 For Augustine on the immutability and eternality of God, see *De trinitate* 15.5 CCSL 50A:18–20: *trinitas . . . in sua natura immutabilis et invisibilis et ubique praesens inseparabiliter operetur*. See also Thomas Aquinas in *Summa theologiae* Ia qq 9–10.

229 See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia q 3 a 4: 'God is his own existence and not merely his own essence.'

230 See Paul quoting the poets at Acts 17:28: 'For "in him we live and move and have our being." See book 3 1009 and n1712 above.

231 Exod 3:14

232 Rev 1:4 and 8, 4:8, 11:17. John the Evangelist takes this Greek expression ὁ ὤν from the Septuagint (Exod 3:14): Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὤν.

there is no other word that comes nearer to expressing the divine nature, as was noticed by the heathens as well, who judged that the most simple, eternal, and unchangeable essence of God was most aptly expressed by two letters shown on the temple of Apollo, EI; for εἶ in Greek means 'you are.'[233]

The title 'God' claims the nearest position to this, though it is relative,[234] just as 'Lord' is, for he is called the God of the Hebrews, the God of Abraham, my God and your God, just as he is called king, lord, and prince. He is not called the being of this or that; hence the Lord, expressing his own divine nature in the Gospel, says, 'Before Abraham was made, I am.'[235]

Though God's nature is ineffable, nevertheless it is designated by various titles in Scripture.[236] At Genesis 32, 'Why do you ask my name?,'[237] God was in the angel. The proof of this is that he was called Israel, that is, 'brave towards God,' instead of Jacob. And there follows, 'I saw the Lord face to face,'[238] etc. The name bestowed on the place, Phanuel,[239] has the same force, that is, from the sight not of an angel but of God. Similarly at Judges 13, 'Why do you ask my name, which is marvellous?,'[240] and again at Exodus 6, 'And I did not indicate to them my name Adonai,'[241] speaking of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Tetragrammaton name, which

* * * * *

233 See Plutarch *Moralia 'The E at Delphi'* 384D–394C chapter 17: '. . . and we in turn reply to him "Thou art," as rendering unto him a form of address which is truthful, free from deception, and the only one befitting him only, the assertion of Being.'

234 Chomarat (ASD V-5 361 945n) notes that the word 'God' (*deus*) includes a relational component, implying 'the god of someone' or 'the god of some people,' unlike the Greek or Hebrew word ('I am': John 8:58), which understands the divinity as subsisting wholly in and of itself. See *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 48 13–18.

235 John 8:56: *Amen, amen dico vobis, antequam Abraham fieret, ego sum.*

236 Cf Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names* passim; Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia q 13.

237 Gen 32:29

238 Gen 32:30

239 'Phanuel' ('face of God'): Gen 32:30

240 Judg 13:18

241 Exod 6:2–3: 'And God said to Moses, "I am the Lord [יהוה]. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty [*El Shaddai*], but by my name the Lord [יהוה] I did not make myself known to them."' The word 'Adonay,' meaning 'my lord,' was spoken whenever the Tetragrammaton (*YWHW*, Hebrew יהוה) appeared in the text; it was a convenient and reverent way of not speaking out the name of God in Hebrew.

is written in four characters (and cannot, however, be pronounced), has the same force. The Jews dedicated these letters to the ineffable nature of God so that it was forbidden to denote anything else with the same letters. Again at Psalm 64, according to the original text of the Hebrew, 'To you silence, praise, God on Sion.'[242] They interpret Sion as a lookout: when you have passed over all corporeal and incorporeal things all the way up to the very minds of the seraphim and you have ascended onto that lofty lookout, all human voices fall silent there and all the imaginings of human understanding. Likewise at Psalm 17, 'He has made darkness his hiding place.'[243]

Whence he is also called ἀόρατος, that is, 'invisible,'[244] not because he cannot be discerned with corporeal eyes, which also applies to man's soul[245] and to any angel, but because he cannot be comprehended as he is by any created intellect. At Exodus 33, 'Man will not see me and live,'[246] John 1, 'No one has ever seen God';[247] Paul likewise calls him 'invisible.'[248] Some assign that title to the Father as properly his, though it is common to all the persons according to their superior nature. The Son assumed a visible body, and the Holy Spirit appeared over the Lord's head in the form of a dove,[249] over the disciples in the appearance of tongues of fire.[250] But the Father appeared similarly to Moses in the burning bush[251]

* * * * *

242 Ps 65:1 (Vulg 64:2). The Vulgate according to the LXX reads *Te decet hymnus Deus in Sion*, but Chomarat (ASD V-5 361 960n) notes that Erasmus uses here Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples' *Quincuplex psalterium* (Paris: Henricus Stephanus 1509), which renders the Psalm 64 (65) according to the Hebrew as *Tibi silentium laus Deus in Sion: & tibi reddetur votum* (92). Cf Vulg 847 (according to the Hebrew): *Tibi silens laus Deus in Sion et tibi reddetur votum*. For Erasmus' interpretation of 'Sion,' see Lèfevre d'Étaples' *Adverte* ibidem (92): 'sion, quod apophaticam negativamque theologiam respicit: cum mens in meditatione immensitatis & incomprehensibilitatis divinae silet agnoscens quicquid dicendo non posse eum laudare qui omni laude in immensum superior est multo minus quam possit totam maris undam pugillo concludere. & hoc silentium divinae laudis quo vel maxime deus laudat.'

243 Ps 18:11 (Vulg 17:12)

244 Col 1:15 and 16; Rom 1:20; 1 Tim 1:17; Heb 11:27

245 Cf Augustine *De trinitate* (*On the Trinity*) 2.8.14 CCSL 50 98–9; NPNF 1st series 3 43–4.

246 Exod 33:20

247 John 1:18; 1 John 4:12

248 For 'invisible,' see 1026 above.

249 Matt 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32

250 Acts 2:3–4

251 Exod 3:2–6

and to Abraham in the angel,[252] and the Father's voice was heard, 'This is my Son,'[253] and likewise, 'I have glorified and again will glorify,'[254] though that nature cannot be perceived by any of the human senses. However, the Father alone is called invisible in the same way that he alone is called wise,[255] is alone called immortal,[256] because the Son and Holy Spirit derive their invisible, immortal, and omniscient nature from him. At Colossians 1 Paul calls the Son the 'invisible image of God.'

Hilary ascribes eternity specially to the Father,[257] not because he alone lacks a beginning in time but because he alone lacks an origin of his nature; two persons are from him, he himself is from none (what Hilary calls eternity more recent theologians call the most perfect mode of beginning).[258] For the same reason, he is called 'the ancient of days' at Daniel 7.[259] He gave his

* * * * *

252 Gen 22:11, 15; God speaks to Abraham through an angel; cf Gen 17:5, 9, 15. Cf Augustine *De trinitate* (*On the Trinity*) 2.10.19–2.11.20 CCSL 50 105–6; NPNF 1st series 3 46–7.

253 Matt 3:17; Mark 1:11, 9:6; Luke 9:35

254 John 12:28

255 Rom 16:27

256 1 Tim 1:17: 'To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God . . .'

257 Hilary of Poitiers (c 315–67 or 68) championed Trinitarian orthodoxy in the West against the Arians; his major work, *De trinitate*, defended the Nicaean position and became the standard Latin exposition of the theology of the Trinity until Augustine's *De trinitate*. Erasmus edited Hilary's writings (Basel: Froben, February 1523); see his dedicatory preface to Jean de Carondelet (Ep 1334), archbishop of Palermo and high-level official at the Hapsburg court in the Low Countries, which was to draw the furor of the faculty of theology at Paris for parts that were 'contumelious' towards general councils and the study of the Doctors of the church' (see CWE 9 250 nn15–16). Hilary's teaching on the natures of Christ tended somewhat towards Monophysite Christology, but this was before the Christological definitions of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451). See DS 250–63 and 300–2. For Hilary's notion of eternity as the special property of the Father, see *De trinitate* 12.25 CCSL 62A 598:1–10); NPNF 2nd series 9 40–233; see 12.25 (224): 'Now since it is the special characteristic of His being that His Father always exists, and that He is always His Son, and since eternity is expressed in the name HE THAT IS, therefore, since He possesses absolute being, He possesses also eternal being.' See also John C. Olin 'Appendix: Erasmus' Letter to Carondelet: The Preface to His Edition of St. Hilary of Poitiers, 1523' in Olin 92–120; and CEBR I 272–3.

258 Chomarat notes that it is not known whom Erasmus has in mind as 'more recent theologians' nor what exactly he wishes to say on this point; ASD V-5 361 981n.

259 Dan 7:9; see also Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names* 10.1–2 (936C–937C).

image to the Son,[260] as Paul also does at Hebrews 1,[261] not because the Holy Spirit is less similar to the Father than is the Son, certainly as pertains to nature, but because the relationship of likeness fits more with the title of Son. But as to why the Son was said to be born, the Spirit to proceed, it is enough to believe, even if we cannot give a definitive explanation.

God is spoken of as one: 'And there is not another besides me,'[262] he says. But though that highest nature can be shared with no one outside the Holy Trinity, nevertheless the word is frequently applied to others, in singular or plural, in Holy Writ.[263] For example, at Exodus 7 the Lord says to Moses, 'Behold, I have set you up as a god for Pharaoh,'[264] because he was going to proclaim his divine power through him; hence the magicians also confessed that the finger of God was present in Moses' miracles.[265] Moreover, he is frequently called 'God of gods,'[266] in the same way that Christ is called 'Holy of holies,'[267] because he infinitely surpasses them all. But just as 'Holy of holies' would not be said if there were not several holies, so 'God of gods' would not be said were there not others also called gods. For example at Psalm 81, 'God stood in the congregation of gods and in the midst he judges the gods,'[268] likewise Psalm 46, 'The mighty gods of the earth were

* * * * *

260 Hilary of Poitiers *De trinitate* 3.23 CCSL 62 95:13–17; NPNF 2nd series 9 69: 'For the Son has received all things from the Father; He is the Likeness of God, the Image of His substance. The words, *Image of His substance*, discriminate between Christ and Him from Whom He is, but only to establish Their distinct existence, not to teach a difference of nature.'

261 Heb 1:3: 'He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature [*figura substantiae eius*], upholding the universe by his word of power' (RSV). See Erasmus *Paraphrasis in epistolam ad Hebraeos* CWE 44 215–16: 'the express image of his substance'; see CWE 44 355 n7 for Erasmus' translation of the phrase.

262 Deut 32:39

263 'Holy Writ' (*mysticis literis*) is another example of Erasmus' many terms for Sacred Scripture.

264 Exod 7:1

265 Exod 8:19

266 Deut 10:17; Ps 136:2 (Vulg 135:2)

267 Chomarat notes that Scripture does not apply this term to Jesus Christ (ASD V-5 363 994n) and queries whether Erasmus is applying the term 'Holy of holies' (the most sacred part of the temple of Jerusalem) to Christ. Origen might have suggested this identification; see eg *In Leviticum homiliae* 5.3 SC 286 214–15:22–5: 'Quae est *hostia*, quae *pro peccatis* offertur et est *sancta sanctorum*, nisi *unigenitus Filius Dei*, Dominus meus Iesus Christus? Ipse solus est *hostia pro peccatis* et ipse est *hostia sancta sanctorum*.' A better reading of the Latin is conveyed by SC (French) and FOC 88 93 (English).

268 Ps 82:1 (Vulg 81:1)

mightily exalted.'[269] Similarly angels too are called gods, as in the Psalm, 'You have made him a little less than the angels';[270] in Hebrew it is *eloim*, one of God's titles, though the word is of indefinite number. At Exodus 22, 'You will not detract from the gods, and you will not curse the prince of the people,'[271] he calls 'gods' those that excel in public rank, a passage that Paul cites in Acts;[272] for if Scripture had intended this of images or of the gods of the nations, it would be in conflict with itself because it so often detracts from the gods. Again at Psalm 81, 'I have said that you are gods and sons of the Most High';[273] in the Gospel the Lord revealed that this passage applied to the prophets, in the course of fending off the charge of blasphemy on the grounds that, in calling God 'Father,' he had indicated that he was the Son of God.[274] At Genesis 31, 'Rachel steals the gods of her father,'[275] who are undoubtedly idols, and Paul at 2 Corinthians 4 calls Satan 'the god of this age.'[276] He also admits that others have many gods and many lords,[277] though Christians acknowledge only a single God and Lord. Finally, he says of the false apostles, 'Whose god is the belly.'[278] But whenever Scripture attributes this title to others, it generally adds something from which the distinction becomes clear. He says to Moses, 'Behold I have set up' or 'I have

* * * * *

269 Ps 47:10 (Vulg 46:10)

270 Ps 8:5 (Vulg 8:6): 'You have made him a little lower than the angels.' Erasmus argues correctly that the Hebrew word *Eloim* (*Elohim*) can be translated as angels, divine beings, gods (God). See JBC 1 577 (35:26). This verse of Psalm 8 also appears in the New Testament at Heb 2:7. Lefèvre d'Étaples' translation of this passage as 'You have made him a little lower than God' brought Erasmus into a painful disagreement with him in 1519. Lefèvre d'Étaples had applied the plural number of *Eloim* 'to the three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.' Erasmus pointed out Lefèvre d'Étaples' contradictions in translating and claimed Johann Reuchlin as his authority, declaring: 'To me it seems probable that the Septuagint translators recognized that here too *Eloim* could be taken as plural in reference, that they were reluctant to say "God," and "Gods" did not seem right, so they translated it as "angels."' See *Apologia ad Fabrum* CWE 83 68–78, especially 68–9; cf Ep 814 to Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, Louvain, 17 April [1518], where he pleads for peace, reconciliation of differences, and a public statement of their personal agreement.

271 Exod 22:28

272 Acts 23:5

273 Ps 82:6 (Vulg 81:6)

274 John 10:34

275 Gen 31:19

276 2 Cor 4:4

277 1 Cor 8:5–6

278 Phil 3:19

made you a god,'[279] but 'being made' does not apply to the true God; nor does he say without qualification, 'I have made you a god,' but he adds 'for Pharaoh.'[280] Similarly, in the Psalm he adds, 'And in the midst he judges the gods';[281] but 'being judged' does not fit the true God. Likewise at Psalm 46 the saints are called 'the gods of the earth'[282] and are said to be 'raised up.' Psalm 8 cannot be understood of the true God, to whom no creature can be compared, but man there is pronounced to be a little lower.[283] At Exodus 22, 'You will not detract from the gods,'[284] Scripture expounds itself: 'and you will not curse the prince of your people.'[285] In Psalm 81, when he adds, 'and all sons of the Most High,'[286] he shows that they are called gods in the way that all whom God has adopted into the number of his children are called saints.[287] Likewise Rachel does not simply call them 'gods' but 'the gods of her father,'[288] in the same way that demons are called 'the gods of the gentiles.'[289] So Satan is called 'the god of this age,'[290] that is, of the unbelievers and of those who situate happiness in this life; thus 'god is their belly'[291] not without qualification, but it is for those who put gain ahead of God. Likewise he is called the God of those by whom he is loved and worshipped; in the Psalm, 'Blessed the people whose Lord is their God.'[292]

In distinction from other gods he is sometimes called the God of armies[293] or Lord of hosts,[294] almighty Lord,[295] creator of heaven and

* * * * *

279 Exod 7:1
280 Exod 7:1
281 Ps 82:1 (Vulg 81:1)
282 Ps 47:9 (Vulg 46:10)
283 Ps 8:5 (Vulg 8:6); see 1070 n270 above.
284 Exod 22:28
285 Exod 22:28 and Acts 23:5
286 Ps 82:6 (Vulg 81:6)
287 See Rom 8:28; 1 Cor 6:2; Col 3:12; 'adopted': Rom 8:15, 9:4; Gal 4:5.
288 Gen 31:19
289 Ps 96:5 (Vulg 95:5)
290 2 Cor 4:4
291 Phil 3:19
292 Ps 144:15 (Vulg 143:15)
293 Pss 80:4, 7, 14 (Vulg 79:5, 8, 15); 84:8 (Vulg 83:9), 89:8 (Vulg 88:9). 'Lord of virtues' (*Deus virtutum*) renders the Septuagint (eg Ps 80:4 [Vulg 79:5] κύριε ὁ θεός τῶν δυνάμεων) and 'Lord God of armies' or 'hosts' or 'powers' (*Deus exercituum*) renders the Septuagint (Ps 24:10 [Vulg 23:10] κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων). 'Virtues' and 'hosts' are interchangeable in translations of the Septuagint for the Hebrew word *Sabaoth* / Σαβαωθ ('armies' or 'hosts' LXX).
294 Eg Pss 24:10 (Vulg 23:10), 48:8 (Vulg 47:9); Isaiah 6:3, 5 (κύριος Σαβαωθ = *Deus exercituum*).
295 Ecclus 42:17; Gen 17:1, 28:3; cf Gen 35:11.

earth,[296] God of the Hebrews,[297] God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,[298] God of our fathers;[299] from his effect, God of peace,[300] God of consolation,[301] God of vengeance.[302]

Some material for speaking will be provided also by the etymology of his name in Hebrew of *el*,[303] *eloim*, *Adonai* and the mystery of the Tetragrammaton, why he is called Θεός [God] in Greek, *deus* in Latin; for in the vernacular he seems to be called 'God' from his goodness.[304]

It should also be noted that this word 'God' or 'Lord' is sometimes used in Holy Writ in such a way as to embrace the entire Trinity, such as when he is called 'omnipotent,' 'eternal,' 'creator of all,' 'Redeemer and Saviour,' or other names that are common to all the persons. Sometimes it is used in such a way that it is the name of one person, such as when God is said to have handed over his Son to death,[305] or the way that it is frequently employed in Paul, especially when it is followed soon after by mention of the Son, whom he often designates by the title 'Lord': at Romans 1, 'For the gospel of God, which he had earlier promised regarding his Son';[306] again in the Gospel, 'So that they might know you alone as the true God, and Jesus Christ whom you sent';[307] likewise in the Psalms, 'The Lord said to my lord'[308] (the former word indicates the Father, the second the Son). Likewise, when the Son is mentioned in the Creed, 'God from God,'[309] it is understood as meaning the Son from the Father, and

* * * * *

296 Cf eg Ecclus 1:8, 24:12; Jth 9:17; cf Gen 1:1; Jth 13:24; Dan 14:4; Acts 14:14; Rev 14:7. The phrase 'maker of heaven and earth' is part of the Nicene Creed; see DS 125, 150; Erasmus *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 269–71.

297 Exod 3:18, 7:16

298 Exod 3:6; Matt 22:32; Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37; Acts 3:13, 7:32

299 Exod 3:13, 15. The Vulgate has *Deus patrum vestrorum* 'the God of your fathers.'

300 Rom 15:33, 16:20; 1 Cor 14:33; 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 4:9; 1 Thess 5:23; Heb 13:20

301 2 Cor 1:3

302 Ps 94:1 (Vulg 93:1) *Deus ultionum Dominus; Deus ultionum libere egit*

303 *el, eloim, Adonai*, the Tetragrammaton. For Hebrew names of God, see John L. McKenzie 'Aspects of Old Testament Thought' JBC II 2:736–40 (77).

304 Erasmus of course cites 'god' (sic) because it is the Dutch word for 'god,' but it is also, as Chomarat notes, the word in English and in Low German; Chomarat remarks that Erasmus' etymology of the word 'god' is *fantaisiste*; ASD V-5 365 32n.

305 Rom 8:32

306 Rom 1:1–2. See book 3 878.

307 John 17:3

308 Ps 110:1 (Vulg 109:1)

309 The Nicene Creed. See *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 281–5.

similarly, when he is called God 'born from a virgin'[310] or is said to have assumed a human body,[311] God is the title of a person. There is not a comparable example available concerning the Holy Spirit, as Gregory the Nazianzen also acknowledges in his *Theologia*.[312] Though there are entirely convincing arguments for concluding that the Spirit is God, nevertheless it is nowhere openly called God unless we admit the passage in Paul at 1 Corinthians 3, 'God will destroy the one who violated God's temple,'[313] for a mention of the Spirit came earlier.[314] As a result, a certain theologian of great renown[315] published this preamble: 'That "There are three Gods" can in some sense be true, namely in the sense that "There are three persons, each one of which is God," ' though he adds that 'a similar form of language should not be employed.' But let others judge whether what that theologian published should be accepted.

* * * * *

310 Cf Matt 1:23; Luke 1:27. The phrase is found in the Apostles' Creed, *natus ex Maria virgine*; see *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 298–9.

311 John 1:14

312 Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio 31* (*Theologica quinta*) PG 36 133–72, especially 157–8; Nazianzus 'On the Holy Spirit' 117–43, especially 133: 'If the fact that the Biblical text does not very clearly or very often call him "God" (as it calls the Father "God," in the Old Testament, and the Son "God," in the New Testament) if this fact, I say, is the cause of your blasphemy, your inordinately verbose irreligion, we shall release you from this mischief by a brief disquisition on things and names, with special reference to Biblical usage.'

313 1 Cor 3:16–17: 'Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple . . .'

314 Cf 1 Cor 2:4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

315 Erasmus omits the name of this 'certain theologian of great renown.' St Augustine flatly rejected this question in homilies 6, 20, and 39: see eg *In Johannis evangelium tractatus* 39.3 (*Homilies on the Gospel of John* 8.25) CCSL 36 346:7–8; WSA III-12 587: ' "So then," they say, "Father and Son and Holy Spirit are three gods?" We answer, "No." ' Peter Lombard, however, raises the question in *Sententiae* 4 dist 23 ch 3.1 (97): 'Here the question is asked: since we say that Father and Son and Holy Spirit are three persons because being a person is common to them, that is, because the Father is a person, and the Son is a person, and the Holy Spirit is a person, why do we not similarly say "three gods," since the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God?' And Pierre d'Ailly (Petrus de Ailliaco, 1350–1420, the 'theologian of great renown'?), however, in his commentary on Lombard's *Sententiae, Quaestiones super libros sententiarum cum quibusdam in fine adjunctis* (Strasburg: printer of Jordanus de Quedlinburg = Georg Husner? 1490; repr Frankfurt: Minerva 1968) takes up the same question; see his *Tabula quaestionum* under *Questio quinta: Utrum potest aliquo modo concedi quod sint tres dii* and his investigation of the question (n p).

There remain the names that are assigned from his gifts or on account of some resemblance,[316] such as when he is called 'salvation,' 'peace,' 'life,' 'joy,' 'victory,' 'glory,' 'hope,' 'help,' and 'our justice' because he bestows these things upon us.[317] Similarly, when he is called 'God of salvation,'[318] 'God of all consolation,'[319] etc, these are the titles of his operations and gifts, and likewise when he is called 'sun,'[320] 'light,'[321] 'living spring,'[322] 'lion,'[323] 'stone,'[324] or something similar. And among these it is safer to predicate of God terms that do not appear too dramatic, for some have worshipped the sun as a god,[325] though no sane person has ever regarded a lion as a god. Since Dionysius in *De divinis nominibus* treats them with adequate fullness,[326] there is no need to repeat them here; but all the names that proclaim a more sublime nature are shared by all the persons, though the habit of Scripture is to attribute certain things to specific persons as peculiar to them, such as when they assign omnipotence and eternity to the Father, wisdom to the Son, and goodness to the Holy Spirit.[327] Of the first sort are 'god,' 'king,' 'creator,' 'light,' 'life,' 'salvation,' and such like.

* * * * *

316 For these names, see Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names* 114–15.

317 Below Erasmus refers to Dionysius as the source for this discussion of the divine names. Chomarat suggests that these names do not seem to be expressions taken from the Bible but are taken from hymns, litanies, or liturgical prayers; ASD V-5 365 56–7.

318 Pss 38:22 (Vulg 37:23), 88:1 (Vulg 87:1)

319 2 Cor 1:3

320 Cf Mal 4:2 (Sun of Justice).

321 The following names seem more appropriately applied to the Son: cf John 1:9 'The true light, which enlightens everyone . . .' and Ps 36:9 (Vulg 35:10).

322 Cf Num 20:6; Jer 2:13; Prov 13:14, 14:27, 16:22. Cf Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names* 115. The phrase 'living spring' (*fons vivus*) is also applied to Jesus; see John 7:37–9, 4:13–14. See also Num 20:8–11 and Ps 36:9 (Vulg 35:10), whose spiritual senses are interpreted as signifying Jesus. See also the hymn *Veni creator Spiritus*.

323 The word 'lion' applied to Jesus is taken from Israel's blessing of Judah in Gen 49:8–12, 'the lion of Judah' (49:9); see also Rev 5:5.

324 Referring to himself, Jesus speaks of the cornerstone that the builders rejected; see Matt 21:42–3, referring to Ps 118:22 (Vulg 117:22) and Isa 28:16. See also 1 Cor 10:4.

325 The worship of the sun was common among peoples of the Mediterranean, eg the Romans' cult of the 'unconquered sun' (*sol invictus*) and the Greeks' worship of the sun-god *Helios*.

326 Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names*, especially 114–15.

327 Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia q 45 a 6 resp 2: 'And to the Holy Ghost is appropriated goodness, to which belong both government, which brings things to their proper end, and the giving of life – for life consists in a certain interior movement; and the first mover is the end, and goodness.'

The exceptions are those that pertain to the special character of the persons; such are 'Father,' 'begetter,' 'beginning without beginning,' 'delegating to the Son,' 'working through the Son,' etc.

The Son

We should think in the same way about the Son, who on account of his triple nature[328] in the same person is designated by more names in the Scriptures than the Father or the Holy Spirit. According to his superior nature, he is called 'God,' 'light,'[329] 'life,'[330] 'justice,' 'sanctification,' 'redemption,' 'resurrection,' 'wisdom,' 'power,'[331] 'truth,' 'Redeemer,' 'Saviour.'[332] These are shared with the Father and the Holy Spirit when they are said without qualification but not when said in relation to something, such as when he is called 'God from God,'[333] 'Light from Light,' 'the wisdom of the Father.'[334] Similarly, the Son is called 'Word' or 'speech'[335] because he is very close to the Father and proceeds from his mind as from a source; likewise, he is called 'image of the

* * * * *

328 For 'triple nature,' see book3 988 and n1538 above.

329 John 1:6 and passim; cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 67 a 1, where he mentions that Psuedo-Dionysius includes 'light' among the 'intellectual names' of God in *The Divine Names* 133–62: 'Concerning the Good, Light, Beauty, Love, Ecstasis, and Zeal. That Evil Is Neither Be-ing, Nor from Be-ing, Nor in Beings.'

330 John 11:25 'I am the resurrection and the life,' 14:6 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life.'

331 'Justice . . . power': 1 Cor 1:30, 24 ('the power of God and the wisdom of God')

332 Erasmus uses the Latin word *servator* 'saviour' instead of *salvator* (Greek σωτήρ *sōtēr*), which appears in Luke 2:11 ('To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior'); cf Isa 12:2 *Ecce Deus salvator meus*.

333 'God from God' and 'Light from Light' are elements of the Nicene Creed that pertain to the Son.

334 The phrase 'the wisdom of the Father' (*sapientia patris*) does not occur in Scripture; but cf 1 Cor 1:24.

335 'Word or speech' (*verbum aut sermo*): John 1:1. Erasmus often dwells on the richness of the Greek word *LOGOS*, which denotes both 'word' and 'speech,' as well as many other meanings, eg, reason, method, theory, discourse, word, etc. For Erasmus' preferences for 'speech' (*sermo*) over 'word' (*verbum*), see *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 15: 'And there is no other object that more fully and clearly expresses the invisible form of the mind than speech that does not lie.' See CWE 46 234–5 nn16–17 for extensive notes on the use of *sermo* and Erasmus' theology; see also 235 n19 for Erasmus' preference for *oratio*. See in addition *Apologia de 'In principio erat sermo'* LB IX 114A. Jerome also discusses the rich meanings of this word; see letter 53 (to Paulinus) NPNF 2nd series 6 96–102: '*Logos* in Greek has many meanings' (98).

Father'[336] and 'splendour' and 'imprint of his Father's nature,'[337] also that he is 'beginning from beginning'[338] and that he works nothing from himself, though he works through himself,[339] because he needs the help of no one. However, he shares some of these with the Holy Spirit, though they are not explicitly attributed to the Spirit in the Scriptures, such as when he is called *homusios*;[340] though this word is not found in the canonical Scriptures, it was nevertheless adopted by the orthodox of antiquity with wide consensus.[341] But if things that are of the same essence are called *homusia*,[342] the essence of the three persons is the same. If the similitude is understood accordingly, all are *homusii* among themselves. But I am uncertain whether the Father is rightly called *homusios* or similar to the Son; certainly it would not be right for him to be called 'image of the Son.' Some things are attributed to the Son according to his assumed nature that fit neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit, such as when he is called 'Son of Man,'[343] 'the new Adam,'[344] 'Jesus,' 'Christ' (that is, 'anointed' by the Father with the fullness of grace), 'the Word incarnate,' 'shepherd,' 'sheep,' 'lamb,' 'priest,' 'Melchisedech,' 'born on earth without a father,'[345] 'of heavenly nativity without a mother,'[346] 'the Virgin's son,' 'obedient,' finally 'victim,' 'sin,'[347] 'execration,'[348] and 'worm.'[349]

* * * * *

336 Col 1:15

337 Heb 1:3 'He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being' (NRSV). See n261 above.

338 Cf John 1:1 and Gen 1:1; see *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 16–18.

339 Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 45 a 6.

340 *Homusios* is Erasmus' rendering of the Greek ὁμοούσιος 'consubstantial'; see DS 125 for the Nicene Symbol (Nicene Creed). See book 3 1076.

341 For background to the Nicene Creed, see Grillmeier I 249–73.

342 The Greek word meaning consubstantiality is ὁμοούσια.

343 'Son of Man,' a messianic title applied by Jesus to himself, is found in Dan 7:13–14 and occurs frequently in the Gospels; see eg Matt 26:64; Mark 14:62; Luke 22:69; and Acts 7:55.

344 See 1 Cor 15:45.

345 John 1:14 'word incarnate,' 10:11 'shepherd'; eg Acts 8:32 'sheep'; John 1:29, 36; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet 1:19; Rev 5:6 'lamb'; Heb 5:6 and 10, 6:20, 7:1 and 10 'priest,' 'Melchisedech'; Heb 7:3 'born . . . father'

346 Heb 7:3. The *Symbolum Constantinopolitanum* (DS 150) declares that Jesus was 'born of the Father before all ages' (*ex patre natum ante omnia saecula*).

347 See Luke 1:27; Phil 2:8 'obedient'; Eph 5:2 'victim' (*oblationem et hostiam*); 2 Cor 5:21 'sin.'

348 Gal 3:13: Erasmus renders the Vulgate's *factus pro nobis maledictum* as *pro vobis factus est execratio*; cf *Paraphrasis in Galatas* CWE 42 110–11.

349 Ps 22:6 (Vulg 21:7) 'But I am a worm and no man' (RSV).

The Holy Spirit

There is hardly any name in Holy Writ that is peculiar to the Holy Spirit except for his claim to 'proceeding,'[350] for the word 'Spirit' itself is common to the whole Trinity. 'Paraclete,' in its meaning 'consoler,'[351] fits all the persons; in its meaning 'advocate'[352] it is shared by the Spirit with the Son, for Christ is the intercessor between God and mankind,[353] and the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.[354] Similarly, the title 'holy' and 'good' or 'kind' is shared with all the persons. It shares being called χάρισμα,[355] that is, 'gift,' with the Son, the Father's gift to us. It is called 'right Spirit,'[356] 'principal Spirit,'[357] 'all-examining Spirit,' 'finger of God,' 'fire,'[358] 'sanctifier.'[359] There are also other names from its effects and gifts, such as 'Spirit of adoption,' 'Spirit of truth,' 'Spirit of freedom,'[360] and at Isaiah 11, 'Spirit of wisdom and understanding,' 'Spirit of counsel and fortitude,' 'Spirit of knowledge and piety,' finally 'Spirit of the fear of the Lord.'[361] Its divine nature is clear from a number of proofs but particularly from the fact that mention of it is joined to the Trinity in many passages of Scripture. Right away in Genesis the Father's word *fiat* [Let it be done] pertains to the Son, and 'It was done'[362] and 'The Spirit of the Lord moved over the waters.'[363] The Son is baptized, the voice of the Father is

* * * * *

350 John 15:26. See *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 182–3.
351 John 14:16
352 John 15:26
353 Chomarat notes that the word 'intercessor' is not present in the Vulgate; ASD V-5 367 98n. Christ, however, 'intercedes' for us (cf Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25 and 9:15). He is also the 'mediator' between God and humankind (1 Tim 2:5; Heb 8:6, 9:15).
354 Rom 8:26
355 Cf 1 Cor 1:7; Rom 1:11, 6:23.
356 Ps 51:11 (Vulg 50:12)
357 Ps 51:12 (Vulg 50:14). For Erasmus' spiritual exegesis and use of these verses, see book 1 CWE 67 157, 263–4, 267, 290, 371.
358 1 Cor 2:10 'all-examining Spirit'; Exod 8:19 and Luke 11:20 'finger of God'; Matt 3:11 and Acts 2:3 'fire'
359 Chomarat (ASD V-5 367 103n) notes that the word 'sanctifier' is absent from the Vulgate, though there appear many words close to this, such as 'to sanctify': cf 1 Thess 5:23; 1 Cor 7:14, 6:11.
360 Rom 8:15 'Spirit of adoption'; John 14:17, 15:26 and 1 John 4:6 'Spirit of truth'; 2 Cor 3:17 'Spirit of freedom'
361 'Spirit of wisdom . . . fear of the Lord': Isa 11:2–3
362 'Let it be done' and 'It was done': Gen 1:3, 6–7
363 Gen 1:2

heard, the Holy Spirit descends in the form of a dove.[364] The Father revives the Son;[365] the latter, when received into heaven, sends the Holy Spirit.[366] The Lord bids believers be wetted with water in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit.[367] There are not a few similar passages that show that the Trinity is incomplete without the Holy Spirit.

The Distinction of the Persons

The word 'person'[368] is not in the canonical Scriptures, at least not in this sense. The Greeks called them *hypostases*,[369] some Romans three 'substances'; both words fell into suspicion because of the Arians.[370]

The subtleties of scholastic theologians, who use various sophistries to dispute how the persons differ among themselves, should not be foisted upon the congregation.[371] It is sufficient to profess that there is one God, three persons, all of which have the same nature, the same divinity, power, wisdom, goodness. Nor is it safe to illuminate the same nature in three persons by proffering images of something created, because whatever you offer brings with it considerable dissimilarity: nothing is like that highest nature. But if it seems useful to present a likeness for didactic purposes, one should preface it by saying that it fits only as a sort of slen-

* * * * *

364 Matt 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–2; John 1:31–4

365 Acts 2:32

366 Acts 1:9–11 and 2:1–4

367 Matt 28:18–20

368 Trinitarian terminology between Latins and Greeks has been confusing. The word 'person' (Latin *persona*; Greek *prosopon*, πρόσωπον) is used in the Latin church to refer to the three persons in one substance, consubstantial with one another (*tres personae in una substantia*; *consubstantialis*). The Greek word *hypostasis* (ὑπόστασις), which in Latin, literally, is *substantia*, is used for each of the three persons of the Trinity who are 'one in being' (οὐσία; ie 'of one substance': ὁμοούσιος). Erasmus notes that the word 'persona' does not appear in the Greek New Testament. It was, however, a critical term in the Trinitarian and Christological controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries. See DS 125, 150, 300–2, 450; Grillmeier I 126–33, 411, 421; and Lampe 1187–8.

369 Erasmus surely means 'three *hypostases*.' It is likely Erasmus at this point is hurrying to the end.

370 The Arians held that the Son was in some way 'less' than the Father. For Arius and Arianism, see book 1, CWE 67 415 n1133.

371 Erasmus reiterates his conviction that recondite scholastic reasonings about the Trinity and other mysteries have no place in a sermon. See Erasmus' letter to Jean de Carondelet (Basel, 5 January 1523), Ep 1334:151–71. See 257 above.

der reflection. The Father begets, the Son is born, the Spirit proceeds or emanates from the Father into the Son, as the Greeks once had it,[372] from the Father and the Son, as the Romans now say. As to the difference between 'being born' and 'proceeding' and why the Spirit is not called the 'Son,' it is enough to believe, unnecessary to discuss. Hence I think that those who have professed that they will prove through human logic our beliefs about the divine persons can hardly be acquitted of a charge of rashness.[373]

The eternity of the Father is shown immediately at Genesis 1, 'In the beginning God created';[374] he who was God in the beginning necessarily had no beginning.

His authority is declared in the same place. He creates everything from nothing. He multiplies creation by a blessing, 'Increase and be multiplied.'[375] He designates a place for man, prescribes his food, enjoins his labour, joins him in marriage:[376] Genesis 2. He posts a law, 'From every tree,'[377] etc. He grants offspring: Genesis 4, 'I have gotten a man with the help of God.'[378]

* * * * *

372 The centuries-long controversy between the Latins and the Greeks on the *filioque* (ie the Latin word signifying that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son together [*patre filioque procedit*]) arrived at an impass in the Great Schism of 1054, which was never resolved despite reconciliation efforts at the Council of Florence (Sixth Session, 6 July 1439), and resulted in the *Bull of Union with the Armenians*; Tanner I 534–59. The Greek Orthodox Church in the end rejected the reconciliation; any further hope at reconciliation ended with the fall of Constantinople in 1453. See DS 150. For a history of this question see Robert M. Haddad 'The Stations of the Filioque' *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 46/2 (2002) 209–68; and Yves Congar *After Nine Hundred Years: The Background of the Schism between the Eastern and Western Churches* (Westport, Conn 1978).

373 Erasmus of course recognizes the woeful inadequacy of language and human reason to express this mystery, and he advises belief.

374 Gen 1:1

375 Gen 1:22, 28

376 'Place for man . . . marriage': Gen 2:15, 16, 24

377 Gen 2:16–17

378 Gen 4:1. For the interpretation of this passage, see Jerome *Liber quaestionum hebraicarum in Genesim* CCSL 72 6: '*Et concepit et peperit Cain et dixit Adquisivi* (sive *possedi*) *hominem per Deum*. Cain adquisitio sive possessio interpretatur, id est κτῆσις, unde etymologiam ipsius exprimens ait *canithi*, id est possedi, hominem per Deum.' See also JBC II 13: 'The name of Cain (*qayin*) is derived, by popular etymology, from the words of Eve, "I have given birth" (*qānîtî*, literally, "I have gotten").'

From a good God comes nothing but good: 'God saw all the things that he had made, and they were very good.'[379]

God the Father creates through the Son. The Father's word is 'Let there be light. And there was light,'[380] through the Son of course, 'and at the beginning the spirit of the Lord moved over the waters.'[381] The one of whom it was earlier said, 'He created'[382] then says, 'Let us make man';[383] this is not a colloquy with the angels, but of the Father to two persons.[384]

God Becoming Known

1/ It is scarcely safe for man to speak about those sublime mysteries of the divine nature; certainly it is not right for just anyone to do so or before just anyone or in any place at all or in just any words.[385]
2/ It is right only for those who have their understanding trained for the contemplation of the intelligible and who have a mind pure and untroubled by any human emotions.
3/ And this too should be done religiously, soberly, and with much reverence and admission of human weakness.
4/ And not before the dense and ignorant or impious, who would sooner mock than believe, but before the sort of people to whom Paul revealed his hidden wisdom, while for the others he knew 'only Jesus Christ and him crucified.'[386]

* * * * *

379 Gen 1:31
380 Gen 1:3
381 Gen 1:2
382 Gen 1:21; see also 1:27.
383 Gen 1:26
384 Erasmus speaks here of the form of the Latin verb 'Let us make' (*faciamus*), which is first person plural. Like the three men (angels) who visit Abraham, so the dialogue in Gen 1:26 has been interpreted as a veiled reference to the preexistence and consubstantiality of Christ (and the Holy Spirit) with the Father; see eg Ambrose *Exameron* (*Six Days of Creation*) 6.7.40; CSEL 32/1 231–2 ('Cui dicit? Non sibi utique, quia non dicit "faciam," sed "faciamus," non angelis, quia ministri sunt, servi autem cum domino et opera cum auctore non possunt operationis habere consortium, sed dicit filio, etiamsi Iudaei nolint, etiamsi Ariani repugnent'); FOC 42 254; and Hilary of Poitiers *De trinitate* 4.17–18 CCSL 62 119–22.
385 Again Erasmus cautions against abstruse scholastic reasonings about the mysteries of the faith in sermons. To speak of such things required much discretion and maturity. Cf 1 Cor 2:6 and *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 13–14.
386 1 Cor 2:2, 6.

5/ Now it is the custom among some to treat a problem from Scotus or another similar writer concerning unnecessary theological subtleties at the end of a banquet in the presence of obtuse businessmen,[387] and to do it with invented words that Scripture does not know and ordinary linguistic competence does not recognize.

6/ It was apparent even to the heathens that God exists, namely from his marvellous creation and governing of nature,[388] but no language can express, much less can created intelligence grasp, what God is, that is, God's nature as he is in himself or explain the generation of the Son or the spiration of the Third Person.

7/ The angels behold God much more clearly than we do, burdened as we are by our earthly bodies, and among them some behold him more perfectly than others; yet not even the seraphic spirits that stand closest fully comprehend that infinite majesty but adore it with trembling.[389]

8/ As to reading that 'God spoke to Moses face to face,'[390] the very absurdity of the meaning shows that it cannot be understood simply, for God has no face, but it must be understood by comparison: Moses knows God more clearly than others. Likewise, John's words, 'We will see him as he is'[391] should be understood by comparison; we will see – that is, we will understand – more closely and more clearly than we now understand, not of course by faith and through veiled riddles and in the mirror of creation,[392] but instead we will then contemplate creation in God himself as the angels do.[393]

9/ Moreover, it is worthwhile to see the stages by which that incomprehensible nature became known to the human race. Before all the ages, God the Father used to talk to himself, so to speak, through the Son in the presence

* * * * *

387 Erasmus alludes to what then must have been a custom among some wealthy businessmen, where those learned in scholastic theology would be invited to dazzle dinner guests by parading their skills in sophistical arguments, a practice to which his *Convivium religiosum* stands in the strongest contrast, where the speakers, while not all trained in theology, speak freely and thoughtfully about religious themes that touch the heart, instil piety, and foster the philosophy of Christ; see CWE 39 171–243; see especially Craig R. Thompson's introduction to the colloquy (171–5).

388 Rom 1:19–20. See Chomarat *Grammaire* I 42–50.

389 See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 58.

390 Exod 33:11

391 1 John 3:2

392 Cf 1 Cor 13:12.

393 See Pseudo-Dionysius *The Celestial Hierarchies*; Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 58 aa 1–4.

of the Holy Spirit, but as long as he remained in himself, he was known only to himself.[394]

10/ But when the world was created through the Son,[395] he began in another way to speak through the Son, and in another way he, so to speak, begat the Son, since according to that supreme philosophy, 'uttering his word'[396] was the same for the Father as 'begetting the Son.'

11/ Therefore, even the heathens, by reasoning from this marvellous spectacle, deduced an everlasting, omnipotent, and immortal divinity, just as if someone gazing upon a painting executed with dazzling artistry were to conceive in his mind from what he sees the outstanding talent of the painter, though otherwise unknown, or if someone hearing a distinguished artist performing skilfully upon the lute were to marvel at the talent of the lutenist even if he does not see the man. This is how we understand the wonderful power of the soul acting in the human body. In the same way, we comprehend in the entirety of the world the immense power, wisdom, and goodness of God even if we are unable to grasp in thought the nature of God as it is; for the whole of creation is in a way talking to us of God, and hence we gain some rudimentary knowledge of God, while man's curious mind infers the nature of the invisible from the visible: first that man's soul is something more excellent than Aristotle seems to think in his work *De anima*, describing the soul to us in such a way that the same definition fits the soul of an ass or a duck.[397] Others realized that the soul is something immortal and separable from the body and somehow shares in the divine nature, suspecting that the spark came from there,[398] not straying so very far from Scripture, which relates that God breathed the breath of life into a clay image of Adam.[399] They also realized

* * * * *

394 Erasmus of course is speaking here in a nontemporal sense of before the creation, before 'in the beginning' (*in principio, en archê*): Gen 1:1 and John 1:1. Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 10 a 3.

395 John 1:3 and Heb 1:2

396 Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 34 a 1.

397 Aristotle *De anima* 2.1.412

398 Stoic philosophers often spoke of the soul as a 'spark of the divinity': see eg Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.9.19: 'Moreover the actual word for "soul" has come from the word for "breath" in Latin; – Zeno the Stoic holds the soul to be fire'; see also 1.18.42; *De finibus* 4.5.12; and the *Dream of Scipio* (Cicero *De republica* 6.9.9–26.29), which Erasmus would have known through Macrobius' *Commentarii in somnium Scipionis*, a work widely available; see eg the edition published at Venice by Augustinius de Zannis de Portesio, 1513. See book 1 CWE 67 256–7.

399 Gen 2:7

that there are incorporeal and invisible spirits.[400] They comprehended that there is a single highest and principal spirit, which they called Jupiter, and finally that this world was created. Through these steps they came to some knowledge of that supreme mind from which everything was created,[401] in which, however, there is nothing so outstanding that it is not infinitely below the first cause.[402]

12/ After this he became known more manifestly through his Spirit speaking through the mouths of the prophets, through certain riddles that offered no slight intimation about his Son, but to a few individuals and with everything covered in the wrappings of types and figures.[403]

13/ Then, when mortals' minds had been prepared as best they could, he spoke to us in a most intimate manner through his Son[404] born from the Virgin,[405] for now the Word, which was God with God the Father without beginning,[406] could be touched by us and revealed to all our senses.[407]

14/ Finally he became known to us most effectively through the Holy Spirit sent from heaven upon the disciples,[408] which now also rests in the bosom of the bride of Christ,[409] which is the church of the saints.[410]

* * * * *

400 See eg Augustine *De civitate Dei* 8.15–22; Augustine discusses Apuleius' views on 'demons.' See Apuleius *On the God of Socrates* in *Apuleius: Rhetorical Works* trans and ann Stephen Harrison et al, ed S.J. Harrison (Oxford 2001) 200 (no 132–3).

401 See Plato *Timaeus* 28–30.

402 Plato *Timaeus* 30–4 and *Laws* 4.716C, 7.821A, 10.886B–899; eg Aristotle *Metaphysics* 9; and Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 44 a 1.

403 Erasmus refers here to the revelation given to the Israelites through Moses and then through the prophets. On 'types and figures,' see book 3 821, 896, 919, 952–3, 959, 963, 971–2. Cf *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 13–38, especially 23. On 'verbal wrappings,' see Chomarat *Grammaire* I 659.

404 Heb 1:2; see also *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 13–38, especially 23.

405 Matt 1:23; Luke 1:27; cf *Paraphrasis in acta* CWE 50 62.

406 John 1:1

407 1 John 1:1. See *Paraphrasis in 1 Ioannis* CWE 44 174–6. See also *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 13–38, especially 23.

408 Acts 2:1–4

409 See Eph 5:21–33. The idea of the church as the bride of Christ is found in many of the Fathers (Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose, Rufinus), and it is also fundamental to the spiritual exegesis of the Song of Solomon; see Origen *The Song of Songs: Commentary and Homilies* trans R.P. Lawson ACW 26 (Westminster, Md 1957). See also Isa 11.2 'The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding.' See book 2 512–13 and n234 above.

410 Cf 1 Cor 16:1. See also Chomarat *Grammaire* I 692–5.

15/ Here indeed one can see God's singular fairness towards us; since he knew the weakness of our nature, he did not reveal himself to us entirely at once but led us gradually and through distinct stages to such a lofty philosophy. He advanced us a certain distance by the law of nature – 'What you do not want done to you, do not do to another'[411] – and from this same law there arose even among the heathen so many laws prohibiting theft, murder, adultery. Fairness of the laws, which quite often vies with (for one may not say 'surpasses') certain regulations of Christians, was not altogether lacking.[412] Let these be the first elements of heavenly theology.[413]
16/ After this the human race slipped into such a degree of blindness that instead of a single God men worshipped countless;[414] instead of the true God they worshipped impious demons, brute animals, wood and stones, until God by means of the law of Moses led them forward from the worship of monstrosities and images to the worship of the one true God. He did not immediately forbid the sacrificing of animals but allowed this in common with the gentiles who worshipped idols. But for a time it was only the Father that was acknowledged; reference to the Son was either nonexistent or obscure, to the Holy Spirit both more infrequent and more obscure.[415]
17/ From the law of Moses he brought us to the gospel, not exhib-

* * * * *

411 1 Tob 4:16

412 Fairness of the laws ... lacking' is an obvious understatement. Numerous ancient writers, such as Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero, addressed topics such as fairness in the laws, legislation, justice, good government, etc. In Cicero's *De legibus* Erasmus would have found a substantial supply of ideas echoing Plato's *Laws*. Cicero maintained that the law was 'the highest reason, implanted in Nature, which commands what ought to be done and forbids the opposite. This reason, when firmly fixed and fully developed in the human mind, is Law' (1.6.18). Other key ideas would include the idea of fairness (1.6.19); *aequitas* and *dilectus*, the divine nature of the soul (1.8.24), man's likeness to God and the nature of virtue (1.8.25), that man is born for justice (1.10.28), that justice is the foundation of all the virtues (1.18.48), the idea of pure religion (1.22.60), and the divine origins of the law in the mind of God (2.4.8–10); *illa divina mens summa lex est, cum in homine est perfecta ... in mente sapientis*. The numerous topics Cicero and others have addressed could greatly assist the preacher in laying the foundation for *pietas* under the virtue of 'equity' (*aequitas*).

413 'Heavenly theology' (*theologia coelestis*)

414 Genesis records that after the fall of Adam and Eve the human race deteriorated, rapidly losing knowledge of the creator God and falling deeper into ignorance; thus it began to worship creatures instead of the creator.

415 See *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 13–18.

ited straightway but promised, hence the remarkable anticipation of the Messiah.[416]

18/ Finally, Christ's coming removed the veil of the Law[417] and advanced us from the carnal to the spiritual, yet it did not do so suddenly but moved us forward one step at a time from the lowlier to the more sublime.[418] First he revealed a man,[419] then a great man, namely a prophet and one even greater than the prophets;[420] he frequently called God his father[421] though he professed himself a son of Adam,[422] and he gave some indication of his divine nature in other veiled phrases[423] but a far better indication by his miracles and resurrection. And when his disciples were already trained as best they could, he promises the comforter, the Spirit proceeding from the Father,[424] and he grants to the apostles the power of remitting sins through the Holy Spirit[425] and commands them to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.[426] Elsewhere he professes that he has more to say,

* * * * *

416 Erasmus does not dwell at length on the title Messiah, preferring instead to use the term 'Christ' (*Christos*), 'the Anointed One.' See *Paraphrasis in acta* CWE 50 73 (on Acts 10:28–36): 'Although God long ago promised through the mouth of the prophets that he would send the Messiah, that is, the Christ, he has now at last fulfilled what he promised.' See also *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 39: 'She [Mary] was the mother of the promised Jesus, Saviour of all, whom the Hebrews call the Messiah, that is, the Christ or anointed one.' See also Peter's confession of faith (Matt 16:14–16) in CWE 45 245–7, where he deals with the title with restraint.

417 Exod 34:33–5 and 2 Cor 3:7–4:6

418 See 1084 above. This idea of progression in spiritual things parallels Erasmus' own methods and is also traditional. See eg Augustine *De trinitate* 1.2 NPNF 1st series 3 18. 'In order, therefore, that the human mind might be purged from falsities of this kind, Holy Scripture, which suits itself to babes has not avoided words drawn from any class of things really existing, through which, as by nourishment, our understanding might rise gradually to things divine and transcendent.'

419 Ie John the Baptist: John 1:6; cf Matt 3:14.

420 Cf Luke 7:26.

421 Matt 18:35; John 8:16, 54; see also Matt 5:48.

422 Ie 'Son of Man.' In Hebrew, 'Adam' means 'man.' See eg Matt 8:20, 9:6, 16:27. See also JBC I 11 (2:20).

423 For 'veiled phrases' (*verborum involucra*), see Chomarat *Grammaire* I 659. See eg 1084 and n384 above.

424 John 14:26

425 John 20:22–3

426 Matt 28:19

but he suppressed it because they were not yet ready to understand.[427] The great foundation of the heavenly philosophy was set in place, but all this, as though in a dream, still smacked of the flesh until the presence of the body was removed[428] and that fiery Spirit came that turns flesh into spirit.[429]

19/ And there was nothing grudging about this: rather it showed the kindness of divinity accommodating itself to our weakness,[430] like mothers, who would be more likely to choke an infant than feed it if they plunged all the food at once into its mouth, and so they gradually insert food that is milky and premasticated until with the advance of years they become capable of taking more solid food. If Moses, in the course of weaning them away from the worship of many gods, had immediately revealed that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were to be worshipped with equal honour, he would have recalled them from worshipping a crowd of gods to three gods: for when could those dolts, who could barely be convinced that there was only one God, have been convinced that three are to be worshipped with equal honour and that those three are one God?

20/ And this consideration is both most fit for instruction and most effective for convincing. Prescribing is only a form of compulsion, and the human mind is better led by persuasion than compelled by prescriptions.[431]

* * * * *

427 John 16:12–13

428 Ie the Ascension (Acts 1:9–11). Christ's ascension therefore provides the condition for the fuller spiritual perception of Christ in his teaching and examples, as the 'wrappings' have been removed and the spiritual *res* become visible. This of course attends on the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2).

429 Acts 2:1–4

430 Many passages in Scripture suggest or speak of God accommodating himself to man's limited capacity to understand; cf Ezek 1:1–28; 1 Cor 13:9–12; John 11:39–45. Erasmus presents God in 'speaking' to humankind over the ages as the divine master of education who knows perfectly how to accommodate his words to our feeble capacity. For Erasmus the preacher's ability to accommodate his words to his audience, as God has done to humanity, is of crucial importance; and in fact one purpose of the *Ecclesiastes* is to improve those skills in the preacher. Chomarat (ASD V-5 375 247–8n) notes that the theme of God's 'condescension' (*συγκατάβασις*) to human capacity is particularly prominent in the works of John Chrysostom who 'Christianized' this rhetorical concept PG 48 722. See also Augustine *De doctrina christiana* passim.

431 Erasmus picks up again the theme that the preacher's only weapon is persuasion, never coercion; see book 1 CWE 67 383: 'This pastor of ours has only the power of persuasion'; and CWE 67 276: 'to draw the greatest number of people to Christ with soft and comforting words, or to draw them to him with threats and accusations, or to lead them to him through instruction . . .' (1.10).

21/ The apostles used the same moderation in spreading the gospel. The Lord himself nowhere showed contempt for the Law, but fulfilled all its requirements,[432] proclaiming that he had come not to abolish the Law but to fulfil the Law.[433] But the apostles did not immediately condemn sacrificial victims and circumcision, being not unaware how difficult it is to alter rituals handed down from your ancestors to which you have already become accustomed. St Paul allowed Timothy to be circumcised,[434] and he himself undertook a vow when shorn at Cenchreae;[435] nor did Peter dare to baptize Cornelius until advised in a vision,[436] and it is likely that the apostles initially allowed anyone to be made a Jew from a heathen through circumcision, with the intention of course that he would advance from this step to Christ. In this the apostles indulged the unconquerable stubbornness of the Jews for a time. Then in the council at Jerusalem[437] Peter expressed the opinion that the gentiles should be freed from the burden of the Law, though James made certain exceptions.[438] Next Peter dared to make a free choice of diet,[439] and Paul did not hesitate to shout, 'If I am still preaching circumcision, why do I still endure persecution from the Jews?'[440]

22/ At last this equitable treatment on the part of the apostles succeeded so well that not only the gentiles but even the Jews themselves placed their whole trust in the grace of Christ and spontaneously abandoned circumcision and their other ancestral rites.[441]

23/ It is useful to employ a similar approach if some long-established error or some custom has taken hold of minds for many centuries. These should not all be abrogated immediately but gradually, until the people are convinced and voluntarily abandon their habits; thus physicians do not apply the most effective drugs immediately but weaken a disease with milder remedies.

* * * * *

432 Matt 3:15, 5:17–18
433 Matt 5:17–18. See *Annotationes in Matthaeum* 5:17–18 ASD VI-5 132–4; and *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 95–7.
434 Acts 16:3
435 Acts 18:18. See Erasmus' discussion of this in the *Paraphrasis in acta* CWE 50 114; and see *Annotationes in acta* 18:18 ASD VI-6 294.
436 Acts 10
437 Acts 15:1–30; see also Galatians 2 for the controversy on circumcision between Paul and the other apostles.
438 Acts 15:13–21
439 See Acts 10:9–11:18.
440 Gal 5:11
441 See Acts 10:9–11:18.

24/ In fact another act of divine goodness and its concern for our weakness is that Christ withdrew his body into heaven, but not immediately, showing himself at frequent intervals to the eyes of his followers so that in the spirit they might gradually become accustomed to contemplate only the heavenly.[442] 'It is good for you that I go away,'[443] he said; for if God were constantly visible and active among us and endured the monstrous crimes of humanity with the same gentleness with which he now does, would he not quickly fall into contempt, and would we not have the same experience as the frogs in the fable who mocked the log that was sent instead of a king?[444]

25/ One should recommend frequently to one's listeners to do everything as though under the eyes of an all-seeing God, even the secrets of their hearts;[445] if ever he turns a blind eye and tolerates our evils, we should fear that he is readying a more severe vengeance if we ignore him when he is merciful.

The Angels

Angels too deserve our love on many accounts, whether because they are the familiar servants of our common Lord or because by the highest Prince's command they bear a sincere affection towards the chosen, being bestowed upon us as guardians[446] against impious spirits; their presence should deter us from sinning, for we sadden them and drive them from us whenever we scorn God's commandments and obey Satan's promptings.[447] The latter and his agents are always alert to destroy; the former are always alert to protect. For human life is exposed to so many accidents that few

* * * * *

442 Cf Acts 1:1–5; 1 Cor 15:3–8.

443 John 16:7

444 Phaedrus *Fables* (*Ranae regem petunt*) 1.2; on Phaedrus, see OCD 808.

445 Cf Matt 6:1–18 and Acts 1:24.

446 Scriptural evidence for each person having a guardian angel is Matt 18:10 ('I tell you their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven') and Gen 48:16. See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia q 113 (*De custodia bonorum angelorum, et de impugnatione malorum*) and 'angel' ODCC 61–2.

447 The theology of angels and their functions is developed by numerous writers in Christian tradition. See eg Augustine *De civitate Dei* 11.29–12.10; Pseudo-Dionysius *The Celestial Hierarchies* passim; Peter Lombard *Sententiae* book 1 in Marcia L. Colish *Peter Lombard* (Leiden 1993) I 303–52; Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia qq 50–64, 103–115 passim; Etienne Gilson *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (New York 1956) 160–73; and 'angel' ODCC 61–2.

infants would reach adolescence, few adolescents manhood, few men old age, if angels did not constantly care for us. It is fair to love in return those who wish us well; it is fair to venerate those who have a more sublime nature and stand firm in the love of God. They carry our prayers to God, carry his munificence back to us, bring solace in afflictions (for we read of them also comforting Christ in his agony);[448] they inspire holy desires, assist in temptation, are glad in our prosperity, grow somehow sad in our troubles, and all await the perfection of the body of Christ.[449] Yet they are not to be adored,[450] though we read in the books of the Old Testament of angels being adored, such as at Genesis 18;[451] but it must be understood that they adored God in the angels or else that the word 'adore' has been put for 'venerate,' just as we read of kings too being adored,[452] though in Revelation the angel refuses this very honour,[453] acknowledging the dignity to which human nature had been elevated through the Word made flesh,[454] and professes himself a fellow slave, though in the Old Testament they allow themselves to be called lords.[455]

There is no need to philosophize about the nature of angels any more deeply than has been handed down in the canonical books. It is agreed that angels exist and that God administers human affairs through them. The titles of certain ranks have been made known,[456] of some even their proper

* * * * *

448 Luke 22:43

449 Erasmus alludes to Eph 4:12–13, where Paul speaks of the universal church in the Risen Christ, who is head of the body and whose members, all given special gifts by the Holy Spirit, are united with him and work to build up of the whole body of Christ.

450 Erasmus again makes the distinction between adoration (Latin *latria*; Greek λατρεία) and veneration (Latin *dulia*; Greek δύλια), which is honour and reverence due to the angels, saints, and holy objects, such as the wood of the true cross. See Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 103 ('On Dulia').

451 Gen 18:2

452 Esther 3:2. Chomarat notes that this is not the adoration of the king but of his minister Aman; ASD V-5 377 310n.

453 Rev 19:10 and 22:9

454 'Word made flesh': John 1:14

455 'to be called lords,' see eg Gen 19:2, Zec 1:9.

456 A few groups of angels are mentioned in Scripture, such as cherubim (Gen 3:24; Exod 25:18–20), seraphim (Isa 6:2, 6–7), archangels (eg 1 Thess 4:16; Jude 9 [Michael]), 'rule and authority and power and dominion' (Eph 1:21), 'thrones, dominions, principalities, authorities' (Col 1:16); Paul, however, does not refer to these as angels or ranks. All other teaching on the groups and ranks of angels is extrascriptural. See Thomas Aquinas' comments on angels and their ranks in *Summa theologiae* Ia q 108 a 3: 'Now our knowledge of the angels

names.[457] They are incorporeal intelligences; whenever they appear, they present an assumed form to the eyes. They are called men, not because there is any sex among angels but because they show themselves in that form. However, since the dullness of the human mind barely believes in the existence of what it cannot see, it is useful to instil already in tender minds that there are invisible spirits that witness all our actions and even our thoughts, that they like sobriety, modesty, truth, simplicity, and whatever pertains to true piety: though you shut out all men, you still have an angel observing. One should also see to it that they form a pious opinion regarding the saints who have departed this life.

From the mere taste that we have given so far, the thoughtful reader will readily conjecture how many volumes would be needed if someone should try to pursue everything individually,[458] not to mention that it would be foolish and even disagreeable to prescribe everything in formulas and put it in the mouth like prechewed food for infants. Therefore, I leave the work that remains for the zealous to complete, so that each may examine the sacred books and choose for himself what he will judge useful for preaching and arrange it in a convenient order, such as the following: that the first nativity of man, as of other creatures, was from clay, his propagation from flesh; his second from the Spirit, his propagation through preaching of the word.[459] Genesis 2, 'The Lord God shaped man from the

* * * * *

is imperfect, as Dionysius says (Coel. Hier. vi). Hence we can only distinguish the angelic offices and orders in a general way, so as to place many angels in one order. But if we knew the offices and distinctions of the angels perfectly, we should know perfectly that each angel has his own office and his own order among things, and much more so than any star, though this be hidden from us.' See also Pseudo-Dionysius *The Celestial Hierarchies* passim.

457 Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael are the names of the three archangels mentioned in Scripture (Luke 1:26, Jude 9, Rev 12:7, Tob 3:25, 5:17, 12:15).

458 Erasmus comes to the end of his expanded exposition of the *sylva*, which he admits could consume volumes. Leaving the rest to the industry of scholars and preachers, he proposes a 'convenient order' based on comparing carnal birth and propagation as taught in the Old Testament with spiritual birth and propagation as proclaimed by the gospel.

459 John 3:5–6; cf Rom 10:17. Erasmus succinctly recapitulates his view of salvation history, which moves from the creation of humankind as composed of earthly matter and carnal propagation, through the fall, sinfulness, and the reception of the Law to the coming of Christ the teacher who brings about a new spiritual creation; with baptism, God's abundant grace, and the pursuit of *pietas*, one becomes a member of Christ's body and is united to God who

clay of the earth,'[460] Genesis 1, 'God blessed them,' saying, 'Increase and be multiplied,'[461] but God previously imparted this blessing to fish, reptiles, and birds.[462] The same thing is repeated in chapters 8 and 9 when men and animals have been reduced to a small number.[463] As to increasing a more blessed generation, God instructed, 'Go into the entire world and preach the gospel to every creature.'[464] Thus the new man has been multiplied, and the new creation in Christ.[465] Of the earlier it was said, 'Male and female he created them,'[466] of the later Paul said, 'In Christ there is not male and female but a new creation.'[467] Therefore honour is due to marriage,[468] which God himself instituted and blessed, but greater honour is due to those

* * * * *

is 'purest spirit.' The entire divine program of the 'transformation of souls,' of course, is predicated upon faithful ministers of the word who will teach the philosophy of Christ that enlightens all persons. See *Paraphrasis in Joannem* CWE 46 46. In *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 61, Erasmus makes clear that the word has gone forth throughout the world, for 'nothing has been neglected by God who invites all mortals to salvation, and although there is no nation to whom the gospel has not been preached, nevertheless not all believe in the gospel ... Indeed, even among the gentiles very few believe in the gospel if they are compared with those who do not believe.'

460 Gen 2:7

461 Gen 1:28

462 Gen 1:22

463 Gen 8:17 and 9:1

464 Mark 16:15; Matt 28:16–20

465 'New man': Eph 4:24; 'new creation': 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15. See also Acts 8:26–40, the story of Philip's baptism of the eunuch of Queen Candace of Ethiopia; and see *Paraphrasis in acta* CWE 50 63: 'After baptism, he is not a eunuch, or an Ethiopian, but a new creation.' Cf 2 Cor 5:17 and Gal 6:15.

466 Gen 1:27

467 Gal 3:28

468 One key text that some writers have used to support the claim that marriage is one of the seven sacraments is Eph 5:32 (Vulg *sacramentum hoc magnum est*), which can be translated as 'This is a great sacrament'; but Erasmus chooses, more aptly, to translate the word *sacramentum* as 'mystery,' which falls squarely in line with the Greek word *mysterion* (*τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο μέγα ἐστίν*); see CWE 43 347–8 and nn38–9; and *Annotationes ad Ephesios* 5:32 in Reeve and Screech (2) 615, where he points out that tradition (eg Dionysius, Jerome, Augustine) has not used this passage to support matrimony as one of the seven sacraments. Nonetheless, Christ, Paul, and the early church held matrimony in great esteem; see especially *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 216: 'The Lord Jesus himself went out of his way not only to show respect for the married state in a number of ways but even to lay down rules for married life' (216 n5: eg Matt 19:3–12).

who have castrated themselves for the sake of the kingdom of God,[469] that is, the preaching of the gospel.

In addition, the first law was 'Do not eat, otherwise you will die.'[470] That immediately declared the truth of what the Apostle wrote, 'The Law works anger,'[471] and here the whole image of the thing is laid before the eyes, how man lapsed from innocence into sin.[472] The Law is the occasion, the instigator the serpent, misusing man's free will and promising impunity; the lure is the apple. Eve, our flesh, is seduced;[473] through her, reason is dragged into an association with crime. The immediate concomitant of sin is a troubled conscience, which before was free from care.[474] They blush, hide, and flee the sight of God, although after a fall the only remedy is to flee for refuge to God's eyes. When accused, they equivocate; Adam throws the blame upon Eve, Eve upon the serpent, whereas confession is the most effective thing for placating God. Hence the swarm of all the woes by which the life of mortals is afflicted, the kingdom of death and of Satan. For the same reason, Cain did not deserve forgiveness: when accused, he chose to dissemble the murder of a brother by equivocating rather than confessing.[475] Before God, whom nothing escapes, equivocation is foolish, confession entirely safe. From sin was born servitude: Genesis 3, 'You will be under the power of a man, and he will be in control of you.'[476] She had led into error; her authority is abrogated. Even man's dominion over every kind of animal was abrogated; now they attack man in various ways, openly, by stealth, by force, by poisons, so that there is hardly a place where one can be safe. There are so many kinds of poisons in plants and fruits, in the earth, in the waters, as if laying an ambush against human life; innocence would have been safe from all of this.

Now, the two principal fruits of matrimony are a pleasant life companionship ('It is not good for man to be alone')[477] and offspring. Each benefit was vitiated through sin; woman has a master instead of a companion, and

* * * * *

469 Matt 19:12. See Erasmus' comments on this passage in *Paraphrasis in Matthaeum* CWE 45 273–4 and nn19–23.

470 Gen 2:17

471 Rom 4:15

472 Erasmus follows here the narrative from Genesis 2 and 3.

473 'Eve, our flesh'; see book 3 954; and *Enchiridion* CWE 66 25: 'By woman I mean the carnal part of man. This is our Eve, through whom the cunning serpent lures our mind towards deadly pleasures.' See also CWE 66 47–8.

474 For 'troubled conscience,' cf Gen 3:7.

475 Gen 4:1–16

476 Gen 3:16

477 Gen 2:18. See Erasmus *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 203–438, especially 247.

often a man gets such a wife that it is more desirable for him to be alone. There remains the ability to give birth, which brings grievous travails,[478] sometimes even death. In fact, a man generally gets such children that being childless can seem fortunate, since Eve's firstborn was a murderer.[479]

It will serve as a rebuke to the people of our time for their extravagance and their self-indulgent gourmandizing, which neither earth nor sea can satisfy,[480] that at Genesis 1 no kind of food was permitted except for the fruits of the earth and the produce of the trees, and man shared this fodder with the other animals up until the Flood.[481] Nor is there any mention meanwhile of wine; Noah at chapter 9 was the first to plant a vine, and he learned by experience that from wine arises drunkenness, from drunkenness every kind of shame.[482]

The fact that Shem and Japheth averted their faces and covered their father's pudenda while Ham was cursed with dire execrations because he looked at them shows the great reverence with which children once regarded their parents;[483] many people are far from this modesty and wash naked with their sons and daughters in the same baths.

After men began to be carnivores, animals also began to live by butchery and to devour men in turn.[484] Longevity decreased because of luxury.[485] Indeed, it would be appropriate for those who reflect upon the pristine state of innocence through the grace of the gospel to work towards the same frugality.

Among so many, only Noah is praised because he did everything that God had commanded him,[486] and so he was saved along with a few others by his faith while the rest were drowned in the Flood.[487] Through faith alone is there salvation,[488] but within the ark; outside the church there is no hope of salvation.[489]

* * * * *

478 Gen 3:16
479 Gen 4:8
480 Here follow good examples of Erasmus' finding the moral utility of Scripture for rebuking vices and instructing in virtue; cf 2 Tim 4:2; Titus 1:13, 2:15; 1 Thess 5:14; 2 Cor 2:6.
481 Gen 1:29–30; cf Gen 9:1–4.
482 Gen 9:20–1
483 Gen 9:22–7
484 Gen 9:3–5
485 Cf Gen 5:1–6:3.
486 Gen 6:9: 'Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation.'
487 Genesis 6–8
488 Cf Gal 3:1–14; Rom 4:22–3; 1 Pet 1:5, 9; 2 Tim 3:15.
489 Genesis 7–8. For the exegesis of Noah's ark as a symbol of the church, see eg Augustine *De civitate Dei* 15.26. 'Outside the church there is no hope of

Before him, Enoch was praised as having walked with God, and it is not written of him, as it is of others, that he died; but he was taken by God from the scene so that no one would believe that he had been killed secretly through ambush.[490] He was snatched away from an age that was daily sinking more and more into wickedness of every kind, for idolatry had already crept in, according to the interpretation of the Jews; for they read in chapter 4, 'Then the name of the Lord began to be invoked'[491] because the name of God began to be assigned to the sun and moon. There was also a flood of vile lust, as you read in chapter 6.[492]

There follows Abraham, the most noteworthy model of evangelical faith,[493] called Abraham instead of Abram,[494] whereas his wife's name was shortened,[495] thus indicating that through the growth of evangelical faith the tyranny of the flesh decreases in us. And he did not beget Isaac until his own body and that of his wife, who had passed menopause, were half dead.[496] Isaac means 'laughter' or 'joy'; this private joy of a mind at peace with itself is not born in us unless the emotions of the flesh have been mortified through the spirit.

Hence at chapter 12 wealth is indicated as the parent of discord between the servants of Lot and the servants of Abraham,[497] but Abraham, because of his sense of justice, acted in the interests of peace. Sometimes separation nurtures friendship better than close familiarity. Abraham, as someone who is truly spiritual, does not divide up the land but lives anywhere, in tents, like a stranger in this world, wholly

* * * * *

salvation' recalls Cyprian of Carthage's phrase *salus extra ecclesiam non est* (*Ep* 73.21.2), a statement that has had narrow and wide interpretations. Erasmus begins his *Explanatio symboli* with the same phrase he uses here; see CWE 70 236.

490 Gen 5:23–4. Erasmus' speculation why Enoch was taken by fate derives from John Chrysostom's *Homilia in Genesim*; see *Homily* 21 (11–15) FOC 82 58–61. Erasmus, however, adds the detail, 'so that no one would believe that he had been killed secretly through ambush.'

491 Gen 4:26 'At that time men began to call upon the name of the Lord.'

492 Gen 6:12

493 Genesis 12–25; cf Gal 3:6–9; Rom 4:13–22.

494 Gen 17:5: 'Neither shall thy name be called any more Abram: but thou shalt be called Abraham: because I have made thee a father of many nations' (DV).

495 Gen 17:15: 'God said also to Abraham: "Sarai thy wife thou shalt not call Sarai, but Sarah" ' (DV).

496 Gen 17:17

497 Gen 13:5–7 (not chapter 12)

dependent upon the will of God, though Lot too is just, albeit at a far inferior degree; he selects a pleasant and well-watered land and does not in fact build cities himself but inhabits cities built by others.[498] But Abraham in his tents converses with angels and with God;[499] Lot was at risk in the city.[500] Abraham builds only altars to the Lord,[501] seeking God's glory, not his own, and does not cultivate vines, which turned out badly for Noah,[502] but digs wells and seeks veins of living water.[503] But the impious children of Adam, in trying to construct a tower extending up to heaven and to make their name famous over all the earth, produced (alas!) so many kinds of languages out of a single language.[504] Ambition is the mother of quarrels, pride the parent of ambition, and there is no other source from which so many wars, so many disputes, so many sects, so many clashing opinions come among mortals. If we were truly seeking the glory of God, we would be glorifying God unanimously with a single voice.[505]

Here Isaac comes forward as a type of Christ, whom faith begets in us and by whose grace all nations have earned blessing.[506] Ishmael, the son of a maidservant,[507] a wild and quarrelsome man, is his counterpart, for immediately from boyhood he began to fight with Isaac.[508] But, through Christ, the Law's harshness, which begot contentious and quarrelsome

* * * * *

498 See Gen 13:10, 12.

499 Gen 13:14–17, 15:1–21, 17, 18

500 Gen 19:9. Lot ended up in Sodom, which God later destroyed by fire (Gen 19:24–8), but he was spared.

501 Gen 12:7–8, 13:18

502 Noah became inebriated (Gen 9:20–7), which led to his curse of Canaan, the son of Ham.

503 Chomarat notes that this information is not in Genesis but can be inferred from passages such as Gen 16:7 and 14; ASD V-5 383 413–4n.

504 Erasmus refers here to the story of the tower of Babel at Gen 11:1–9. See Erasmus' paraphrase of this biblical event in *De recta pronuntiatione* CWE 26 389–90.

505 Rom 15:6

506 Isaac is a type of Christ and of the Christian community (cf Gal 4:28–31 and Rom 9:7), who is a son by God's promise, not just by the will of the flesh. Cf Gen 17:16–21.

507 Ishmael was the son of Hagar, an Egyptian slave girl and handmaid of Sarah; see Gen 16:1–16.

508 Chomarat notes that Genesis gives no account of fighting between Ishmael and Isaac and that this interpretation likely follows Paul's exegesis of this passage in Gal 4:28–9; ASD V-5 385 422n.

men, ceased, and grace prevailed, bringing freedom of the spirit. Hagar was cast out with her son, taking no provision with her except a skin full of water,[509] the lifeless letter,[510] of course, until Christ turned it into wine.[511]

Hence the origin of circumcision,[512] which designates evangelical purity by having the emotions of the flesh cut away through the spirit.[513] But just as Isaac was nourished through his infancy with milk,[514] so Christ too has his infancy in us, who are yet intolerant of solid food and need milk;[515] but when the boy grew and was weaned from milk, Abraham prepared a great feast.[516] Meanwhile, the mothers of our time are rebuked for their exquisite delicacy because Sarah, the wife of such a powerful man, did not find it a burden to give her son the milk of her own breasts, especially when she was already an old woman; but I shall stop devising these outlines too so as not to bore the reader.[517]

* * * * *

509 Gen 21:14–15; cf Gal 4:30.

510 Ie *insipida litera*. The term 'insipid' or 'flavorless' seems ill chosen; to fit this context the translation reads, '... the lifeless letter ... until Christ ...' 'Lifeless' is a common meaning of *insipidus* in Erasmus, and the reference is to the letter of the Law. The story of Sarah and Hagar in Genesis is interpreted and reinterpreted by Paul – and by Erasmus in the paraphrases on Romans 4 and on Galatians 4. Gentiles (and Jews) cannot be bound by the lifeless letter of the Law. The idea recurs in the *Paraphrasis in Galatas* (4); CWE 42 120 translates, 'The inheritance of eternal salvation was promised and is owed to Isaac. Let Hagar carry off if she wishes the jug of the insipid law which she so passionately loves.' In our passage the allegory is complicated by having the miracle at Cana (John 2:1–11) woven into it.

511 John 2:1–10. Erasmus expands on Paul's allegorical exegesis of the story of Hagar and Sarah; see Gal 4:21–31.

512 Gen 17:10–14

513 Cf Romans 4, 12:1–2; 1 Cor 1:26–31, 7:18–26; Col 2:11–15; see also *Paraphrasis in Romanos* CWE 42 69–71.

514 Gen 21:7–8

515 See 1 Cor 3:2; Heb 5:12–13; 1 Pet 2:2.

516 Gen 21:8

517 Erasmus often rebukes women of his age for not breastfeeding their children. He suggests that in having a woman of bad moral character breastfeed one's child 'the infant drinks up the quality of these vices right with the milk itself' (book 2 542). He defends this opinion, though notes one can dispute it: 'We propose that the character of a wicked nurse passes to the infant through her milk; it will be a conjectural status, for it can be doubted whether this is true, and it can be denied by someone who disagrees' (book 2 585).

But someone who is preparing himself for the office of preacher will select things of this sort to have at hand when speaking, since he will constantly be busy in the gardens of the Scriptures. And he will note not only what contributes to commending the virtues and to execrating the vices but also what pertains to theological dogmas, that is, the opinion to be held regarding God and the divine persons, about Christ's incarnation, about the church, and about other articles of faith.[518] In addition to this he will observe vigilantly the laws that the mystical books[519] prescribe for human actions, such as how marriage should be contracted or the reasons for which it should be sundered; the extent to which it is right to undertake a war; how magistrates should be appointed; the extent to which the edicts of princes should be obeyed; how heretics should be treated; what one should do in a persecution set in motion because of the faith. Yet in all of this he will consult the learned reflections of those who by daily study have acquired a deep knowledge of the Scriptures and have won great authority in the church by the holiness of their life and the honesty of their judgments.[520] Scholastic disputes contribute considerably to this if they are conducted soberly and rely especially upon scriptural foundations.[521] Nor should one reject anything that a church synod has decided on these issues; that is far safer than relying upon one's own understanding and more useful for promoting concord.[522]

I believe that enough was said in the previous books concerning commonplaces, concerning types and allegories, concerning aphorisms and remarkable occurrences in human life.

* * * * *

518 This passage anticipates the Council of Trent's statement on preaching 'vices and virtues' and 'the things necessary for the faith'; see *Concilium Tridentinum* v 246. See introduction CWE 67 95 and book 1 CWE 67 268 n133.

519 'Mystical books' (*arcanae literae*): ie the books of Sacred Scripture.

520 Chomarat (ASD v-5 385 445–8n) sees this as a general term encompassing the best authorities among the Fathers and more recent writers. For Erasmus' enumeration of the Fathers to be used, see book 3 passim. Erasmus' recommendations here follow those in book 2 489–96. The diligent preacher will consult all the best authorities in order always to stay as close as possible to the safe and solid sense, which is the best course for fostering concord, Erasmus' theme for the remainder of book 4.

521 Erasmus again emphasizes the importance of scholastic theology and debate in the training of the preacher; his caution, however, is always to avoid making it the end of the preacher's work or entertaining these questions in the pulpit as one would in the schools.

522 'Concord' (*concordia*)

All that is left is for some example to be presented, finished and complete with the entire paraphernalia of oratory, though this of itself would be matter for a good-sized book.[523] For example, if someone were aiming to commend concord, he would first define what is true concord: the agreement of good men in a good cause (for the agreement of bad men in a bad cause is not concord but conspiracy).[524] Moreover, the 'concordant' are so called because they all have one heart, just as the 'unanimous' are so called because many men have a single soul.[525] This is impossible among those who have a double heart and bear one in their mouth, hide another in their breast. The author of this concord is that heavenly Spirit that glues and connects everything together.[526] For just as a man's spirit keeps the individual members of his body in their framework as long as it flourishes in a man,[527] so, according to St Luke, the disciples all had one heart and one soul after Christ's Spirit had descended upon them.[528] They had the same opinions, spoke of the same things, namely the wondrous actions of God, not men's opinions. Moreover, just as the first and highest author of concord is God, so Satan first sowed discord between God and men.[529]

The highest and archetypal example of concord is the shared nature, shared will, shared power of the three persons.[530] The next is Christ, to

* * * * *

523 Erasmus ends his treatise with a brief example of how one might 'commend concord' in a sermon; this part summarizes well his pastoral ideal of living the life of a Christian in society and in Christ's church, and it echoes his many works and comments; see eg *Querela pacis* CWE 27 289–322; *De concordia* CWE 65 126–216, completed in 1533. For this theme elsewhere in the *Ecclesiastes*, see eg book 2 722–3, 871–2 and n862, 907, 1028–9.

524 See Thomas Aquinas' discussion of 'concord' and 'peace': *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 29 a 1, where he argues that peace is not the same as concord but more inclusive because it embraces not only concord but a union of appetites among people and in each individual person: 'Peace includes concord and adds something thereto. Hence wherever peace is, there is concord, but there is not peace, wherever there is concord, if we give peace its proper meaning.'

525 The adjective *concors* and the noun *concordia* are derived from *cor* 'heart' and the prefix *con-* 'together' and so mean, more or less, 'hearts together.' Latin *unanimus* (and *unanimis*, the form used by Erasmus here) comes from *unus* 'one' and *anima* 'soul' or *animus* 'mind.' (Translator's note)

526 Cf Eph 4:1–16.

527 This description concurs with Aristotle's definition of the soul in *De anima*, which Erasmus criticizes above 1082.

528 Acts 2:1–4, 4:31–2

529 See Genesis 3.

530 This teaching of the Trinity's shared nature, will, and power can be found in many authors; see eg Augustine *De trinitate* 4.9.12, 13.11.15: 'Both the Father

whom the church has been so attached that God, man, and the whole assembly of the devout[531] constitute one person and through this undivided association enter into a sharing of the Father and of the Holy Spirit.[532] It is one body with one head;[533] the one head is with the Father and the Holy Spirit. The third is in the interassociation of the members of the mystical body, an example that St Paul is frequently repeating to us.[534] The many members have been assigned to various duties, and yet they are so completely a single body that the injury of any member reaches the entire body and the glory of each is shared by all.[535] The symbol of both concords is in the *synaxis*, that is, in the communion of the body and blood of the Lord.[536] The fourth is in the joining of male and female.[537] From the two is made one flesh, and they are so joined by the tenacious glue of love that a man would sooner endure being torn from his mother or father than from his wife. The fifth is in the joining of body and soul, which themselves cohere in a sort of marriage.[538] The mind is in the place of the husband, the body that of the wife: the mind commands, but lovingly the body obeys.[539] Their separation shows the tightness of the bond by which they cling, for nothing is grimmer than death. A lifeless corpse shows how much the body owes to the soul.[540] Where then is beauty, where is vision, where hearing, where speech, where motion? In turn, the soul torn away does not rest until it is called back to its old habitation.[541] The sixth example

* * * * *

and the Son, and the Spirit of both, work all things equally and harmoniously (*concorditer*); 15.19.36. Cf Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* I q 30 a 4–q 31 a 4.

531 Cf Eph 4:1–16. See 988 and 1027 above for Erasmus' discussion of Christ's 'three natures'; and *Explanatio symboli* CWE 70 298–9.

532 Erasmus addresses this unity above at book 4 1028–9.

533 Col 1:18

534 Eg Rom 12:4–5; 1 Cor 12:12; Eph 4:4, 4:15–16; Col 2:19

535 1 Cor 12:12–26

536 *Synaxis* (σύναξις) means a 'gathering,' 'coming together,' or 'assembly'; here the meaning is that of gathering for the Eucharist (cf 1 Cor 10:16–17; Acts 2:42).

537 Gen 2:18–24 and Matt 19:4–6; Mark 10:2–12; see also *Institutio christiani matrimonii* CWE 69 203–438.

538 See many of these images of peace and harmony, like the unity of body and soul, in *Querela pacis* CWE 27 293–6.

539 See 1047–8, 1057 above.

540 In 'lifeless corpse,' the word translated 'lifeless' is *exanimis*, derived from *anima* 'soul' and therefore meaning literally 'without soul.' (Translator's note)

541 Chomarat (ASD V-5 387 487n) detects in this phrase an echo of Augustine's *Confessions* 1.1.1.

is in the heavenly bodies;[542] though they move in various directions, they nevertheless maintain their concord, by the creator's order, in a perpetual pact for so many thousands of years.[543] The seventh is in the elements, which though they differ in their native qualities nevertheless serve each other in turn in a marvellous harmony;[544] the unmovable earth balances everything surrounding it, water moistens, air revivifies, fire sets in motion. The eighth is in brute animals and in their variety. Bees and ants work together,[545] concordant among themselves in a marvellous polity. Cattle join together into a sort of battle line when they see a wolf. Doves flock together when they see a kite. Even the mortals of antiquity devised covenants for communities in order to live more safely and more pleasantly, for a city is nothing but the friendship of many people obeying the same laws in concord and protecting each other with mutual assistance.[546]

Examples of concord can also be drawn from inanimate things. You would easily break individual arrows, but could not break them if joined together; likewise, fragile individual threads are quite strong when joined together. Thus there are many things that are preserved if joined, will be ruined if you separate them, just as wine goes flat in a cup, preserves its freshness in a large vessel; thus too water spoils in a jug but does not spoil in a well. Because a vine is not sufficient for itself, it props itself in the embrace of stronger plants; the gourd does the same.

To this it should be added that no battle line is safer than the one that is in close order and provides mutual defence with its shields, and they are generally not defeated in war except when the soldiers abandon their ranks and separate themselves or when there is discord among the leaders. So effective a thing is concord that thieves too and pirates understand that their enterprise will not succeed unless they are held together in some type of friendship. Need I mention that nature itself encourages

* * * * *

542 See Erasmus *Querela pacis* CWE 27 294.

543 Erasmus' description of the harmonious movements of the heavenly bodies over many thousands of years recalls Cicero's words on 'the Great Year'; see Cicero *De republica* 6.22.24 and *Tusculan Disputations* 5.24.68–9; see also Macrobius *Commentarius in somnium Scipionis* (*Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*) 2 XI; and Erasmus *Querela pacis* CWE 27 294; Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* Ia qq 103–10.

544 'Serve each other in a marvellous harmony': see eg Plato *Timaeus* passim.

545 See *Querela pacis* CWE 27 294; and *De copia* CWE 24 615, where Erasmus speaks of the 'social organization of the bees in order to promote respect for law and civil discipline.'

546 See *Querela pacis* CWE 27 295.

friendship with so many inducements, pushes us in that direction by offering so many favourable occasions? It has added genuine affection among parents and children, among brothers and sisters, among relatives and kin, among men of the same nation and city – in short among all that are similar, such as among boys, among the elderly, among scholars.[547] Hence it is that crows rejoice in the company of crows,[548] cranes fly together.[549] Moreover, nature has so distributed among men the gifts of physical strength, intellectual ability, and fortune that no one is self-sufficient,[550] but everyone needs the mutual assistance of others. From this the reader easily sees how many examples of concord could be accumulated from all sorts of things.

Now, just as Satan strengthens his tyranny with discords, so Christ steadies his kingdom with concord. This is what we pray for daily in the Lord's Prayer: 'May your kingdom come, may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'[551] The church seeks an entire peaceful kingdom free from every rebellion. Christ was the cornerstone[552] that joins both walls, the Jews' and the gentiles'; he has demolished the wall that separated God and men, abrogated the contract[553] of sin by which Satan held us bound and fixed it to the cross, and signed for us with his own blood a new contract of peace and grace through which we have become children of God instead of enemies.[554] He himself is the intercessor and conciliator between God and men,[555] and reigning with the Father he is today our

* * * * *

547 See *Adagia* I ii 21 *Simile gaudet simili* 'Like rejoices in like,' I ii 22: *Semper similem ducit Deus ad similem* 'God always leads like to like.'

548 See *Adagia* I ii 23 *Semper graculus adsidet graculo* 'Jackdaw always sits by jackdaw.'

549 See *De ratione studii* CWE 24 685–6. Erasmus also notes that likes do not associate with unlikes: *Adagia* I iv 37 *Nihil graculo cum fidibus* 'A jackdaw has no business with a lute.'

550 Unlike God who is sufficient unto himself; cf *Adagia* II ix 74 *Nullius indigens Deus* 'God is in need of nothing.' See Acts 17:25. This was also a fundamental tenet of the Stoics; see eg Clement of Alexandria *Stromateis* 5.76.1 on this Stoic belief.

551 Matt 6:10 and Luke 11:2; Matt 21:42; Mark 12:10; Acts 4:11; cf Isa 28:16; Ps 118:22 (Vulg 117:22).

552 Eph 2:20; see also 1 Pet 2:7–8; Eph 2:4; and *Querela pacis* CWE 27 302.

553 See Col 2:14: '... erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross.' See *Paraphrasis in Colossenses* CWE 43 414–16.

554 Cf 2 Cor 5:11–21.

555 Cf Heb 8:1–7, especially 6 for Christ as mediator.

advocate,[556] pleading the things that make for our peace.[557] Moreover, the peacefulness of his nature is perhaps shown by the fact that he reconciled Pilate and Herod.[558] 'When I have been lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all things unto me,'[559] he said. What a crowd of gods there was in the world, what monstrosities were worshipped as divine! How many nations there were thoroughly dissimilar in languages, rituals, and customs! But all have been brought to the worship of the one God, called to the same grace and into one city, or rather fastened together into one body.

Next the types of concord need to be distinguished. The first is of man with God, which occurs through faith and innocence. The second is of man with man, which Christian charity secures. The third is of each man with himself, which is provided by a mind at peace with itself and flesh that obeys the spirit.[560] These are so connected with each other that they are either all present or all absent. No one has peace with himself if there is a tumult of thoughts in his breast accusing or defending each other. No one has peace with God if he has a quarrel with his neighbour.[561]

After this, examples of concord will be sought from Holy Writ, such as at Genesis 13; Abraham avoided quarrels and nourished concord by yielding from his authority to his inferior Lot.[562] Jacob did so in a comparable way by giving way to the fury of Esau, then returning and softening him with gentle words and gifts.[563] With equal courtesy he took care that hatred did not arise between his father-in-law Laban and himself.[564] In Judges 1 Judas and Simeon join forces and conquer the Canaanite,[565] according to the old proverb, 'Brother, stand by your man.'[566] At 3 Kings 12[567] there is an example concerning Reboam, who followed the advice of the young men and alienated the ten tribes from himself, which shows

* * * * *

556 John 14:17 and 1 John 2:1
557 See 1 Tim 2:5.
558 Luke 23:12
559 John 12:32
560 Here Erasmus echoes St Thomas' teaching on 'peace' and 'concord'; see Thomas Aquinas *Summa theologiae* IIa IIae q 29 a 1. See n524 above.
561 Matt 5:23–4
562 Gen 13:8–9; see 1094–5 above.
563 Gen 27:41–5
564 Gen 31:36–55
565 Judg 1:1–7
566 *Adagia* I vii 92 *Frater viro adsit* 'Let a man's brother stand by him.'
567 1 Kings 12:1–19

that concord is nourished by mildness, discord begotten by savagery. It will be possible for a great mass of similar examples to be collected from the holy books, and no fewer from secular books. There remain the passages that commend concord to us. And immediately in Genesis, 'It is not good for man to be alone, let us make a helper for him like himself';[568] similarity is the mother of love,[569] and friendship assists in difficult circumstances, makes prosperous circumstances more pleasant. Ecclesiastes 4, 'Woe to the man who is alone, because if he falls he has no one lifting him up,'[570] etc, Proverbs 18, 'A brother who is helped by a brother is like a strong city.'[571] At Ecclesiasticus 25 'the concord of brothers, the love of neighbours, and a man and woman in harmonious agreement together' are mentioned among the things that are approved in the eyes both of God and of man.[572] All those instructions in the New Testament about charity, about loving even one's enemies, all of Paul's exhortations to unanimity – to what do they call us but to concord? 'Having peace with all men as far as you can, not defending yourselves, dearest ones,' he says.[573] Among the heathens too there are sentiments gravely expressed, such as, 'In concord small things grow, in discord great ones slip away.'[574] I shall not pursue this part further, considering an indication to be enough. Division will provide the order and the supply of arguments.

Nothing is more in accordance with human nature than friendship: 'See how good and how pleasant,'[575] etc. Nothing is more pleasing to God than the agreement of good men, nothing safer for the protection of body and soul; from these it will be shown how great a benefit concord brings. Connected to these are the things by which true friendship is won and those by which it is nourished and strengthened, those by which it is spoiled and lost.[576] Here will be the place to explain the duties of Christian

* * * * *

568 Gen 2:18
569 *Adagia* I ii 21 *Simile gaudet simili* 'Like rejoices in like.'
570 Eccles 4:10
571 Prov 18:19
572 Ecclus 25:2
573 Rom 12:18–19
574 Sallust *Jugurtha* 10.6 (*Nam concordia parvae res crescunt, discordia maxumae dilabuntur*); and cited by Seneca *Epistulae morales* 94.46, who quotes Marcus Agrippa quoting this proverb.
575 Ps 133:1 (Vulg 132:1)
576 For the duties of Christian friendship, see above all the words of Christ in *Paraphrasis in Joannem* 15:13 CWE 46 178–9 ('Greater love has no man than this,

friendship and what a pestilential thing is a false friend and a flatterer. Now there are as many arguments to be made against discord as we have showed in favour of concord. I think that by now it is self-evident what an endless effort it would require to pursue them all individually, especially if we tried to give a full explanation of what we have glimpsed, as it were, through a lattice.[577] Hence I have decided to put an end here to the fourth book. I admit it is very brief as I have sketched it, but it would be very long if someone should assemble what remains to be said, following this model.

* * * * *

that a man lay down his life for his friends'); and on (Christian) friendship in Erasmus, see Yvonne Charlier *Erasme et l'amitié: D'après sa correspondence* (Paris 1977); Kathy Eden *Friends Hold All Things in Common: Tradition, Intellectual Property, and the 'Adages' of Erasmus* (New Haven 2001); and Tracy (2) 31–56. Cf *Moria* CWE 27 96–8; Cicero *De amicitia* 10.15 and passim.

577 *Adagia* III i 49 *Per transennam inspicere* 'To see through a lattice.'

WORKS FREQUENTLY CITED

SHORT-TITLE FORMS
FOR ERASMUS' WORKS

INDEX OF
BIBLICAL AND APOCRYPHAL REFERENCES

GENERAL INDEX

This page intentionally left blank

WORKS FREQUENTLY CITED

This list provides bibliographical information for the publications referred to in short-title form in introductions and notes. For Erasmus' writings see the short-title list following.

ACW	*Ancient Christian Writers*: *The Works of the Fathers in Translation* ed Johannes Quaesten and Walter J. Burghardt (New York 1946–)
Alan of Lille	Alan of Lille *The Art of Preaching* [*Summa de arte praedicatoria*] trans Gillian R. Evans, Cistercian Studies Series 23 (Kalamazoo 1981)
Allen	*Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami* ed P.S Allen, H.M. Allen, and H.W. Garrod (Oxford 1906–58) 11 vols and index vol by B. Flower and E. Rosenbaum (Oxford 1958).
Anal. hymenica	*Analecta hymenica medii aevi* ed Guido Maria Dreves and Clemens Blume (Leipzig 1886–1922; repr New York 1961)
ANF	*The Ante-Nicene Fathers* ed Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Buffalo 1886–96; Peabody, Mass repr 1994) 10 vols
ASD	*Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami* (Amsterdam 1969–)
Augustine	Saint Augustine *On Christian Doctrine* trans D.W. Robertson (New York 1958)
Augustine	*Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* ed Allan D. Fitzgerald (Grand Rapids, Mich 1999)
Augustijn *Erasmus*	Cornelis Augustijn *Erasmus: His Life, Works, and Influence* trans J.C. Grayson (Toronto 1991)
Augustijn 'Reformation'	'Erasmus und die Reformation in der Schweiz' *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 86 (1986) 27–42
AV	*The Holy Bible . . . Authorized King James Version* (London 1611; repr 1969)
Béné *Érasme*	Charles Béné *Érasme et saint Augustin ou influence de saint Augustin sur l'humanisme d'Érasme* (Geneva 1969)
Bentley *Humanists*	Jerry H. Bentley *Humanists and Holy Writ: New Testament Scholarship in the Renaissance* (Princeton 1983)

Biblical Humanism	*Biblical Humanism and Scholasticism in the Age of Erasmus* ed Erika Rummel (Leiden 2008)
Bibliotheca sanctorum	*Bibliotheca sanctorum* (Rome 1961–70)
Black	Robert Black *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy: Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge c 2001)
Bowersock *Late Antiquity*	*Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World* ed G.W. Bowersock, Peter Brown, and Oleg Grabar (Cambridge, Mass 1999)
Caplan	Harry Caplan 'Classical Rhetoric and the Mediaeval Theory of Preaching' *Classical Philology* 28 (1933) 73–96
CCSL	*Corpus christianorum, series Latina* (Turnhout 1954–)
CCCM	*Corpus christianorum, continuatio mediaevalis* (Turnhout 1966–)
CEBR	*Contemporaries of Erasmus: A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation* ed Peter G. Bietenholz and Thomas B. Deutscher (Toronto 1985–7) 3 vols
CHB	*Cambridge History of the Bible*: I *From the Beginnings to Jerome* ed P.R. Ackroyd and C.F. Evans (Cambridge 1970); II *The West from the Fathers to the Reformation* ed G.W.H. Lampe (Cambridge 1969); III *The West from the Reformation to the Present Day* ed S.L. Greenslade (Cambridge 1963)
Chantraine	Georges Chantraine *'Mystère' et 'philosophie du Christ' selon Érasme: étude de la lettre à P. Volz et de la 'Ratio verae theologiae' (1518)* (Namur 1971)
Chomarat 'Grammar and Rhetoric'	Jacques Chomarat 'Grammar and Rhetoric in the Paraphrases of the Gospels by Erasmus' ERSY 1 (1981) 30–69
Chomarat *Grammaire*	Jacques Chomarat *Grammaire et rhétorique chez Erasme* (Paris 1981) 2 vols
Chomarat 'Introduction'	Jacques Chomarat 'Introduction' in ASD V-4 (Amsterdam 1991) 3–28
CIC	*Codex iuris canonici*
Classical Tradition	*The Classical Tradition* ed Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most, and Salvatore Settis (Cambridge, Mass 2010)

Clavasio	Angelus de Clavasio *Summa angelica* (Lyon: J. de Cambray 1523)
CLCLT	Library of Latin texts (online) [CLCLT = CETEDOC] (Turnhout 2005–)
Colloquia Erasmiana	*Colloquia Erasmiana Turonensia: douzième stage international d'études humanistes, Tours 1969* ed Jean Claude Margolin (Toronto 1972–) 2 vols
Concilium Tridentinum	*Concilium Tridentinum: diariorum, actorum, epistularum, tractatuum nova collectio* ed Societas Goerresiana (Freiburg im Breisgau 1901–2001) 13 vols
CPG	*Clavis patrum Graecorum* ed Maurice Geerard (Turnhout 1974–87) 5 vols
CPL	*Clavis patrum Latinorum* ed Eligius Dekkers (Steenbrugis 1995)
Crichton	J.D. Crichton *The Ministry of Reconciliation* (London and Dublin 1974)
CSEL	*Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (Vienna 1866–)
CWE	*Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto 1974–)
de Lubac *Medieval Exegesis*	Henri de Lubac *Medieval Exegesis* I: *The Four Senses of Scripture* trans Mark Sebanc (Grand Rapids, Mich and Edinburgh 1998); and idem II trans E. M. Macierowski (Grand Rapids, Mich and Edinburgh 2000)
Denzinger	*Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* ed H.D. Denzinger and A. Schönmetzer 33rd ed (Barcelona 1965)
DMA	*Dictionary of the Middle Ages* ed Joseph R. Strayer (New York c 1982–c 1989) 13 vols, 1 Supplement
DS	*Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique: doctrine et histoire* ed Marcel Viller, F. Cavallera, J. de Guibert (Paris 1937–95) 17 vols
DV	Douay-Rheims Version (Bible)
ER	*Encyclopedia of the Renaissance* ed Paul F. Grendler (New York 1999) 6 vols

ERSY	*Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook*
Escobar	Andreas de Escobar *Modus confitendi* (n p c 1520) British Library C 32 a 39 [8]
Exomologesis 1524	Erasmus of Rotterdam *Exomologesis sive Modus confitendi, per Erasmum Roterodamum, opus nunc primum & natum & excusum cum aliis lectu dignis, quorum catalogum reperies in proxima pagella* (Basel: Ioannes Froben 1524)
Exomologesis 1530	Erasmus of Rotterdam *Exomologesis, per Des. Erasmum Roterodamum recognita diligenter & aucta . . .* (Basel: Froben 1530)
FOC	*The Fathers of the Church* (Washington, DC 1947–) 127 vols
Francis of Assisi	*Francis of Assisi: Early Documents* I ed Regis J. Armstrong et al (New York 1999)
Fumaroli	Marc Fumaroli *L'Age de l'éloquence: rhétorique et 'res literaria' de la Renaissance au seuil de l'époque classique* 3rd ed (Geneva 2002)
Gabbay	*Handbook of the History of Logic* II: *Mediaeval and Renaissance Logic* ed Dov M. Gabbay and John Woods 1st ed (Amsterdam and Boston 2004–)
GCS	*Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte* (Leipzig 1897–1969) 53 vols
Gilson 'Michel Menot'	Étienne Gilson 'Michel Menot et la technique du sermon médiéval' in *Les Idées et les Lettres* (Paris 1932) 93–154
Godin	André Godin *Erasme, lecteur d'Origène* Travaux d'humanisme et Renaissance 190 (Geneva 1982)
Godin *Spiritualité*	André Godin *Spiritualité franciscaine en Flandre au XVIe siècle: l'homélaire de Jean Vitrier. Texte, étude thématique et sémantique* preface by Alphonse Dupront (Geneva 1971)
Gogan	Brian Gogan 'The Ecclesiology of Erasmus of Rotterdam: A Genetic Account' *Heythrop Journal* 21/1 (1980) 393–411
Grendler (1)	Paul Grendler *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300–1600* (Baltimore c 1989)
Grendler (2)	Paul Grendler *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore 2002)

Grillmeier	Aloys Grillmeier *Christ in Christian Tradition* trans John Bowden 2nd rev ed (Atlanta 1975) I *From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*; idem II *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604)*; Part 2: *The Church of Constantinople in the sixth century* trans John Cawte and Pauline Allen (London and Louisville 1995)
Grünwald	Michael Grünwald 'Der "Ecclesiastes" des Erasmus von Rotterdam: Reform der Predigt durch Erneuerung des Predigers' (Diss. University of Innsbruck 1969)
Halkin	Léon-E. Halkin *Erasmus: A Critical Biography* (Oxford 1993)
Hirsch	Rudolf Hirsch 'Surgant's List of Recommended Books for Preachers (1502–1503)' *Renaissance Quarterly* 20 (1967) 199–210
Hoffmann *Rhetoric*	Manfred Hoffmann *Rhetoric and Theology: The Hermeneutic of Erasmus* (Toronto 1994)
Holborn	Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus *Ausgewählte Werke* ed Hajo Holborn with Annemarie Holborn (Munich 1933; repr 1964)
JBC	*The Jerome Biblical Commentary* ed Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy (Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1968) 2 vols
Jedin	*Handbook of Church History* ed Hubert Jedin and John Dolan ([New York] [1965–70]) I, III, IV; *History of the Church* ed Hubert Jedin and John Dolan (New York 1980–2) II, V–X
Jungmann	Joseph A. Jungmann *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development* (*Missarum Sollemnia*) trans Francis A. Brunner (Westminster, Md 1986) 2 vols
Kaster *Guardians*	Robert A. Kaster *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley 1988)
Kennedy	George Kennedy *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World, 300 B.C.–A.D. 300* (Princeton 1972)
Kilcoyne and Jennings	Francis P. Kilcoyne and Margaret Jennings 'Rethinking "continuity": Erasmus' *Ecclesiastes* and the *Artes praedicandi*' in *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* n s 21/4 (1997) 5–24

Kleinhans	Robert G. Kleinhans 'Erasmus' Doctrine of Preaching, a Study of "Ecclesiastes Sive de Ratione Concionandi" ' (diss. Princeton Theological Seminary 1968)
Lampe	G.W.H. Lampe *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford 1961)
Lausberg	Heinrich Lausberg *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study* ed David E. Orton and R. Dean Anderson, foreword by George A. Kennedy (Leiden 1998)
LB	Erasmus *Opera omnia* ed Jean Leclerc (Leiden 1703–6; repr Hildesheim 1961–2) 10 vols
Legenda aurea	Jacobus de Voragine *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints* trans William Granger Ryan (Princeton 1993)
L&S	Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford 1962)
LSJ	Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott *A Greek-English Lexicon* 9th ed (Oxford 1990)
LW	*Luther's Works* (American Edition) ed Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia and St Louis 1955–86) 55 vols
LXX	*Septuaginta* ed Alfred Rahlfs (Stuttgart 1935; 1979) 2 vols in one
Mack	Peter Mack *Renaissance Argument: Valla and Agricola in the Traditions of Rhetoric and Dialectic* (Leiden 1993)
Mack *Renaissance Rhetoric*	Peter Mack *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric 1380–1620* (Oxford and New York 2012)
Manifesta mendacia	*Manifest Lies* trans Erika Rummel CWE 71 115–31
Mansi	Giovanni Domenico Mansi *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* (Florence and Venice: Antonius Zatta 1758–98; repr Graz 1960–2) 54 vols in 59
McConica 'Grammar of Consent'	James K. McConica 'Erasmus and the Grammar of Consent' in *Scrinium* II 77–99
McGinness 'Erasmian Legacy'	Frederick J. McGinness 'An Erasmian Legacy: Ecclesiastes and the Reform of Preaching at Trent' in *Heresy, Culture and Religion in Early Modern Italy* ed Ronald K. Delph, Michelle M. Fontaine, John Jeffries Martin (Kirksville, Mo 2006) 93–112

McGinness *Right Thinking*	Frederick J. McGinness *Right Thinking and Sacred Oratory in Counter-Reformation Rome* (Princeton 1995)
McNeil	J.T. McNeil and H.M. Gamer *Medieval Handbooks of Penance* (New York 1938)
Methodus	*Ratio seu Methodus compendio perveniendi ad veram theologiam* in Holborn 150–62
Minnich	Nelson H. Minnich 'Erasmus and the Fifth Lateran Council (1512–17)' in *Erasmus of Rotterdam: The Man and the Scholar* ed J. Sperna Weiland and W. Th. Frijhoff (Leiden 1988) 46–60
Murphy *Incunabula*	James J. Murphy *Incunabula: The Printing Revolution in Europe 1455–1500. A Guide to Units Twenty-two and Twenty-three of the Microfiche Collection. Incunabula Units 22 & 23: Rhetoric Incunabula: Parts I & II* (Woodbridge, Conn 1998)
Murphy *Rhetoric*	James J. Murphy *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley 1974)
Myers 'Humanism'	W. David Myers 'Humanism and Confession in Northern Europe in the Age of Clement VII' in *The Pontificate of Clement VII: History, Politics, Culture* ed Kenneth Gouwens and Sheryl E. Reiss (Aldershot and Burlington, Vt 2005) 363–83
Myers *Sinning*	W. David Myers *'Poor Sinning Folk': Confession and Conscience in Counter-Reformation Germany* (Ithaca and London 1996)
Nazianzus	St Gregory of Nazianzus *On God and Christ: The Five Theological Orations and Two Letters of Cledonius* ed Frederick J. Williams and Lionel R. Wickham (Crestwood, NY 2002)
NCE	*The New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York 1967–79) 17 vols
Nestle-Aland	Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* 27th ed (Stuttgart 2001)
Noonan *Church Visible*	James-Charles Noonan Jr *The Church Visible: The Ceremonial Life and Protocol of the Roman Catholic Church* (New York 1999)
NPNF	*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* series II (= NPPF series II)
NRSV	*The Holy Bible New Revised Standard Version* (New York 1989)

OCD	*The Oxford Classical Dictionary* ed N.G.L. Hammond et al 2nd ed (Oxford repr 1984)
ODB	*The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (New York and Oxford 1991) 3 vols
ODCC	F.L. Cross *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* ed E.A. Livingstone 3rd ed (Oxford 1997)
ODS	*The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* ed David Hugh Farmer 5th ed (Oxford 2003)
OED	*The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary: Complete Text Reproduced Micrographically* (Oxford 1971) 2 vols
OLD	*Oxford Latin Dictionary* ed P.G.W. Glare 2nd ed (Oxford 2012) 2 vols
Olin	John C. Olin *Christian Humanism and the Reformation: Desiderius Erasmus, Selected Writings* (New York 1965)
Olin *Catholic Reformation*	John C. Olin *The Catholic Reformation: Savonarola to Ignatius Loyola* (New York 1969)
O'Malley 'Content'	John W. O'Malley 'Content and Rhetorical Forms in Sixteenth-Century Treatises on Preaching' in *Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric* ed James J. Murphy (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1983) 238–52
O'Malley 'Grammar'	John W. O'Malley 'Grammar and Rhetoric in the *Pietas* of Erasmus' *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 19 (1988) 81–98
O'Malley *Praise and Blame*	John W. O'Malley *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450–1521* Duke Monographs in Medieval and Renaissance Studies 3 (Durham 1979)
O'Malley 'Sacred Rhetoric'	John W. O'Malley 'Erasmus and the History of Sacred Rhetoric: The *Ecclesiastes* of 1535' ERSY 5 (1985) 1–29
Origenes Werke	*Origenes Werke: Homilien zum Hexateuch in Rufins Übersetzung* part 1: *Die Homilien zu Genesis, Exodus und Leviticus* ed W. Baehrens GCS 29 (Leipzig 1920)
Opuscula	Erasmus *Erasmi Opuscula: A Supplement to the Opera Omnia* ed Wallace K. Ferguson (The Hague 1933)

Otto	A. Otto *Die Sprichwörter und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der Römer, gesammelt und erklärt von A. Otto* (Leipzig 1890; repr Hildesheim and New York 1988)
Pabel	*Erasmus' Vision of the Church* ed Hilmar M. Pabel, Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies 33 (Kirksville, Mo 1995)
Parole du prédicateur	*Parole du prédicateur ve–xve siècle* ed Rosa Maria Dessì and Michel Lauwers, Collection du Centre d'études médiévales de Nice (Nice 1997)
Pastor	Ludwig Pastor (Freiherr von) *The History of the Popes, From the Close of the Middle Ages* ed Frederick Ignatius Antrobus (London 1923) 40 vols
Payne (1)	John B. Payne *Erasmus: His Theology of the Sacraments* (Richmond 1970)
Payne (2)	John B. Payne 'The Hermeneutics of Erasmus' in *Scrinium* II 13–49
PG	*Patrologiae cursus completus ... series Graeca* ed J.P. Migne (Paris 1857–1912) 162 vols
PL	*Patrologiae cursus completus ... series Latina* ed J.P. Migne (Paris 1844–1902) 221 vols
Poeniteas cito	[?Peter of Blois] *De poenitentia* PL 207 1153–6
Porter 'Fisher and Erasmus'	H.C. Porter 'Fisher and Erasmus' in *Humanism, Reform and the Reformation: The Career of Bishop John Fisher* ed Brendan Bradshaw and Eamon Duffy (Cambridge 1989) 81–102
Pseudo-Dionysius *The Celestial Hierarchies*	Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite *The Celestial Hierarchies* 15 (London 1935)
Pseudo-Dionysius *The Divine Names*	Pseudo-Dionysius (the Areopagite) *The Divine Names and the Mystical Theology* trans John D. Jones (Milwaukee 1999)
Quintilian	Marcus Fabius Quintilianus *Institutio oratoria*
Rabil	Albert J. Rabil Jr *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms and Legacy* (Philadelphia 1988) 3 vols
Rahner	Karl Rahner 'Forgotten Truths Concerning the Sacrament of Penance' in *Theological Investigations* II trans K.H. Kruger (Baltimore and London 1963) 135–74

Ratio	*Ratio seu compendium verae theologiae per Des. Erasmum Roterodamum* in Holborn 175–305
Reedijk	Cornelis Reedijk 'Das Lebensende des Erasmus' *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 57 (1958) 23–66
Reeve and Screech (1)	*Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament: Acts, Romans, I and II Corinthians: Facsimile of the Final Latin Text with All Earlier Variants* ed Anne Reeve and M.A. Screech, Studies in the History of Christian Thought 42 (Leiden 1990)
Reeve and Screech (2)	*Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament: Galatians to the Apocalypse: Facsimile of the Final Latin Text with All Earlier Variants* ed Anne Reeve, introduction by M.A. Screech, Studies in the History of Christian Thought 52 (Leiden 1993)
Rhenanus	Beatus Rhenanus *The Life of Erasmus* (in Olin)
Rosemondt	Godschalk Rosemondt *Confessionale* (Antwerp: M. Hillen 1518)
RSV	*The Holy Bible Revised Standard Version* (New York 1974)
Rummel *Catholic Critics*	Erika Rummel *Erasmus and his Catholic Critics* Bibliotheca humanistica & reformatorica 45 (Nieuwkoop 1989) 2 vols
Rummel *Monachatus*	Erika Rummel '*Monachatus Non Est Pietas*: Interpretations and Misinterpretations of a Dictum' in Pabel 41–55
SC	*Sources chrétiennes* ed H. de Lubac and J. Daniélou (Paris 1941–) 564 vols
Schneyer	Johann Baptist Schneyer *Geschichte der katholischen Predigt* (Freiburg c 1969)
Schoeck (1)	R.J. Schoeck *Erasmus of Europe: The Making of a Humanist, 1467–1500* (Savage, Md 1990)
Schoeck (2)	R.J. Schoeck *Erasmus of Europe: The Prince of Humanists, 1501–1536* (Edinburgh 1993)
Scrinium	*Scrinium Erasmianum* ed J. Coppens 2nd ed (Leiden 1969) 2 vols
Seidel Menchi *Erasmus als Ketzer*	Silvana Seidel Menchi *Erasmus als Ketzer: Reformation und Inquisition im Italien des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Leiden 1993)

Sozomen	*The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen* trans E. Walford NPNF series II (Peabody, Mass 1994) 2 179–427
Spykman	Gordon J. Spykman *Attrition and Contrition at the Council of Trent* (Amsterdam 1955)
Stupperich	Robert Stupperich 'Erasmus und die kirchlichen Autoritäten' *Annuarium historiae conciliorum* 8 (1976) 346–64
Tanner	*Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* ed N.P. Tanner (London and Washington 1990) 2 vols
Taylor *Soldiers*	Larissa Taylor *Soldiers of Christ: Preaching in Late Medieval and Reformation France* (New York 1992)
Tentler 'Forgiveness'	Thomas N. Tentler 'Forgiveness and Consolation in the Religious Thought of Erasmus' *Studies in the Renaissance* 12 (1965) 110–33
Tentler *Sin*	Thomas N. Tentler *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Renaissance* (Princeton 1977)
Thomas à Kempis	Thomas à Kempis *Thomae Hemerken a Kempis Opera omnia* ed Michael Iosephus Pohl (Freiburg im Breisgau 1902–22) 7 vols
Thompson 'Better Teachers'	Craig R. Thompson 'Better Teachers than Scotus or Aquinas' in *Medieval and Renaissance Studies: Proceedings of the Southeastern Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Summer, 1966* ed John L. Lievsay, Medieval and Renaissance Series 2 (Durham, NC c 1968) 114–45
Thompson 'Return'	Craig R. Thompson 'The Return to Basel' CWE 40 1122–36
TLG	*Thesaurus Linguae Graecae: Canon of Greek Authors and Works* ed Luci Berkowitz and Karl A. Squitier 3rd ed (New York and Oxford 1990)
Tracy (1)	James D. Tracy *Erasmus of the Low Countries* (Berkeley 1996)
Tracy (2)	James D. Tracy *Erasmus: The Growth of a Mind* (Geneva 1972)
Vita sancti Ambrosii	Paulinus of Milan *Vita sancti Ambrosii* trans Sister Mary Simplicia Kaniecka (Washington, DC 1928)

Vogel	C.J. de Vogel 'Erasmus and His Attitude towards Church Dogma' in *Scrinium* II 101–32
Vulg	*Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem* ed Robertus Weber et al 4th ed (Stuttgart 1994)
Walther and Schmidt	*Proverbia sententiaeque Latinitatis medii ac recentioris aevi: Lateinische Sprichtwörter und Sentenzen des Mittelalters unter frühen Neuzeit in alphabetischer Anordnung aus dem Nachlass von Hans Walther* ed Paul Gerhard Schmidt, n s (Göttingen 1982–6) 3 vols
Wengert	Timothy Wengert 'Famous Last Words: The Final Epistolary Exchange between Erasmus of Rotterdam and Philip Melanchthon (1536)' ERSY 25 (2005) 18–38
Wenzel 'Preaching'	Siegfried Wenzel 'Preaching the Seven Deadly Sins' in *In the Garden of Evil: The Vices and Culture in the Middle Ages* ed Richard Newhauser (Toronto 2005) 145–69
Witt *Footsteps*	Ronald G. Witt *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden 2000)
Wolfs	S.P. Wolfs 'Erasmus von Rotterdam und die Dominikaner zu Löwen' in *Xenia medii aevi historiam illustrantia oblata Thomae Kaeppeli O.P.* ed Raymundus Creytens and Pius Künzle (Rome 1978) 787–808
WSA	*The Works of Saint Augustine, A Translation for the 21st Century* (Hyde Park, NY 2000–)

SHORT-TITLE FORMS FOR ERASMUS' WORKS

Titles following colons are longer versions of the short-titles, or are alternative titles. Items entirely enclosed in square brackets are of doubtful authorship. For abbreviations see Works Frequently Cited.

Acta: Acta Academiae Lovaniensis contra Lutherum *Opuscula* / CWE 71
Adagia: Adagiorum chiliades 1508, etc (Adagiorum collectanea for the primitive form, when required) LB II / ASD II-1–9 / CWE 30–6
Admonitio adversus mendacium: Admonitio adversus mendacium et obtrectationem LB X / CWE 78
Annotationes in Novum Testamentum LB VI / ASD VI-5–10 / CWE 51–60
Antibarbari LB X / ASD I-1 / CWE 23
Apologia ad annotationes Stunicae: Apologia respondens ad ea quae Iacobus Lopis Stunica taxaverat in prima duntaxat Novi Testamenti aeditione LB IX / ASD IX-2
Apologia ad Caranzam: Apologia ad Sanctium Caranzam, or Apologia de tribus locis, or Responsio ad annotationem Stunicae . . . a Sanctio Caranza defensam LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia ad Fabrum: Apologia ad Iacobum Fabrum Stapulensem LB IX / ASD IX-3 / CWE 83
Apologia ad prodromon Stunicae LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia ad Stunicae conclusiones LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia adversus monachos: Apologia adversus monachos quosdam Hispanos LB IX
Apologia adversus Petrum Sutorem: Apologia adversus debacchationes Petri Sutoris LB IX
Apologia adversus rhapsodias Alberti Pii: Apologia ad viginti et quattuor libros A. Pii LB IX / ASD IX-6 / CWE 84
Apologia adversus Stunicae Blasphemiae: Apologia adversus libellum Stunicae cui titulum fecit Blasphemiae et impietates Erasmi LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia contra Latomi dialogum: Apologia contra Iacobi Latomi dialogum de tribus linguis LB IX / CWE 71
Apologia de 'In principio erat sermo': Apologia palam refellens quorundam seditiosos clamores apud populum ac magnates quod in evangelio Ioannis verterit 'In principio erat sermo' (1520a); Apologia de 'In principio erat sermo' (1520b) LB IX / CWE 73
Apologia de laude matrimonii: Apologia pro declamatione de laude matrimonii LB IX / CWE 71
Apologia de loco 'Omnes quidem': Apologia de loco taxato in publica professione per Nicolaum Ecmondanum theologum et Carmelitanum Lovanii 'Omnes quidem resurgemus' LB IX / CWE 73
Apologia qua respondet invectivis Lei: Apologia qua respondet duabus invectivis Eduardi Lei *Opuscula* / ASD IX-4 / CWE 72
Apophthegmata LB IV / ASD IV-4 / CWE 37–8
Appendix de scriptis Clithovei LB IX / CWE 83
Appendix respondens ad Sutorem: Appendix respondens ad quaedam Antapologiae Petri Sutoris LB IX
Argumenta: Argumenta in omnes epistolas apostolicas nova (with Paraphrases)
Axiomata pro causa Lutheri: Axiomata pro causa Martini Lutheri *Opuscula* / CWE 71

Brevissima scholia: In Elenchum Alberti Pii brevissima scholia per eundem Erasmum Roterodamum ASD IX-6 / CWE 84

Carmina LB I, IV, V, VIII / ASD I-7 / CWE 85–6
Catalogus lucubrationum LB I / CWE 9 (Ep 1341A)
Ciceronianus: Dialogus Ciceronianus LB I / ASD I-2 / CWE 28
Colloquia LB I / ASD I-3 / CWE 39–40
Compendium vitae Allen I / CWE 4
Conflictus: Conflictus Thaliae et Barbariei LB I / ASD I-8
[Consilium: Consilium cuiusdam ex animo cupientis esse consultum] *Opuscula* / CWE 71

De bello Turcico: Utilissima consultatio de bello Turcis inferendo, et obiter enarratus psalmus 28 LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 64
De civilitate: De civilitate morum puerilium LB I / ASD I-8 / CWE 25
Declamatio de morte LB IV
Declamatiuncula LB IV
Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas: Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas sub nomine facultatis theologiae Parisiensis LB IX / ASD IX-7 / CWE 82
De concordia: De sarcienda ecclesiae concordia, or De amabili ecclesiae concordia [on Psalm 83] LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 65
De conscribendis epistolis LB I / ASD I-2 / CWE 25
De constructione: De constructione octo partium orationis, or Syntaxis LB I / ASD I-4
De contemptu mundi: Epistola de contemptu mundi LB V / ASD V-1 / CWE 66
De copia: De duplici copia verborum ac rerum LB I / ASD I-6 / CWE 24
De esu carnium: Epistola apologetica ad Christophorum episcopum Basiliensem de interdicto esu carnium (published with scholia in a 1532 edition but not in the 1540 Opera) LB IX / ASD IX-1 / CWE 73
De immensa Dei misericordia: Concio de immensa Dei misericordia LB V / ASD V-7 / CWE 70
De libero arbitrio: De libero arbitrio diatribe LB IX / CWE 76
De philosophia evangelica LB VI
De praeparatione: De praeparatione ad mortem LB V / ASD V-1 / CWE 70
De pueris instituendis: De pueris statim ac liberaliter instituendis LB I / ASD I-2 / CWE 26
De puero Iesu: Concio de puero Iesu LB V / ASD V-7 / CWE 29
De puritate tabernaculi: Enarratio psalmi 14 qui est de puritate tabernaculi sive ecclesiae christianae LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 65
De ratione studii LB I / ASD I-2 / CWE 24
De recta pronuntiatione: De recta latini graecique sermonis pronuntiatione LB I / ASD I-4 / CWE 26
De taedio Iesu: Disputatiuncula de taedio, pavore, tristicia Iesu LB V / ASD V-7 / CWE 70
Detectio praestigiarum: Detectio praestigiarum cuiusdam libelli Germanice scripti LB X / ASD IX-1 / CWE 78
De vidua christiana LB V / ASD V-6 / CWE 66
De virtute amplectenda: Oratio de virtute amplectenda LB V / CWE 29
[Dialogus bilinguium ac trilinguium: Chonradi Nastadiensis dialogus bilinguium ac trilinguium] *Opuscula* / CWE 7

Dilutio: Dilutio eorum quae Iodocus Clithoveus scripsit adversus declamationem suasoriam matrimonii / *Dilutio eorum quae Iodocus Clithoveus scripsit* ed Émile V. Telle (Paris 1968) / CWE 83
Divinationes ad notata Bedae: Divinationes ad notata per Bedam de Paraphrasi Erasmi in Matthaeum, et primo de duabus praemissis epistolis LB IX / ASD IX-5

Ecclesiastes: Ecclesiastes sive de ratione concionandi LB V / ASD V-4–5 / CWE 67–8
Elenchus in censuras Bedae: In N. Bedae censuras erroneas elenchus LB IX / ASD IX-5
Enchiridion: Enchiridion militis christiani LB V / CWE 66
Encomium matrimonii (in De conscribendis epistolis)
Encomium medicinae: Declamatio in laudem artis medicae LB I / ASD I-4 / CWE 29
Epistola ad Dorpium LB IX / CWE 3 (Ep 337) / CWE 71
Epistola ad fratres Inferioris Germaniae: Responsio ad fratres Germaniae Inferioris ad epistolam apologeticam incerto autore proditam LB X / ASD IX-1 / CWE 78
Epistola ad gracculos: Epistola ad quosdam impudentissimos gracculos LB X / Ep 2275
Epistola apologetica adversus Stunicam LB IX / ASD IX-8 / ASD-8 / Ep 2172
Epistola apologetica de Termino LB X / Ep 2018
Epistola consolatoria: Epistola consolatoria virginibus sacris, or Epistola consolatoria in adversis LB V / CWE 69
Epistola contra pseudevangelicos: Epistola contra quosdam qui se falso iactant evangelicos LB X / ASD IX-1 / CWE 78
Euripidis Hecuba LB I / ASD I-1
Euripidis Iphigenia in Aulide LB I / ASD I-1
Exomologesis: Exomologesis sive modus confitendi LB V / CWE 67
Explanatio symboli: Explanatio symboli apostolorum sive catechismus LB V / ASD V-1 / CWE 70
Ex Plutarcho versa LB IV / ASD IV-2

Formula: Conficiendarum epistolarum formula (see De conscribendis epistolis)

Hyperaspistes LB X / CWE 76–7

In Nucem Ovidii commentarius LB I / ASD I-1 / CWE 29
In Prudentium: Commentarius in duos hymnos Prudentii LB V / ASD V-7 / CWE 29
In psalmum 1: Enarratio primi psalmi, 'Beatus vir,' iuxta tropologiam potissimum LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 63
In psalmum 2: Commentarius in psalmum 2, 'Quare fremuerunt gentes?' LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 63
In psalmum 3: Paraphrasis in tertium psalmum, 'Domine quid multiplicate' LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 63
In psalmum 4: In psalmum quartum concio LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 63
In psalmum 22: In psalmum 22 enarratio triplex LB V / ASD V-2 / CWE 64
In psalmum 33: Enarratio psalmi 33 LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 64
In psalmum 38: Enarratio psalmi 38 LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 65
In psalmum 85: Concionalis interpretatio, plena pietatis, in psalmum 85 LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 64
Institutio christiani matrimonii LB V / ASD V-6 / CWE 69

Institutio principis christiani LB IV / ASD IV-1 / CWE 27

[Julius exclusus: Dialogus Julius exclusus e coelis] *Opuscula* ASD I-8 / CWE 27

Lingua LB IV / ASD IV-1A / CWE 29
Liturgia Virginis Matris: Virginis Matris apud Lauretum cultae liturgia LB V / ASD V-1 / CWE 69
Luciani dialogi LB I / ASD I-1

Manifesta mendacia ASD IX-4 / CWE 71
Methodus (see Ratio)
Modus orandi Deum LB V / ASD V-1 / CWE 70
Moria: Moriae encomium LB IV / ASD IV-3 / CWE 27

Notatiunculae: Notatiunculae quaedam extemporales ad naenias Bedaicas, or Responsio ad notulas Bedaicas LB IX / ASD IX-5
Novum Testamentum: Novum Testamentum 1519 and later (Novum instrumentum for the first edition, 1516, when required) LB VI / ASD VI-2, 3, 4

Obsecratio ad Virginem Mariam: Obsecratio sive oratio ad Virginem Mariam in rebus adversis, or Obsecratio ad Virginem Matrem Mariam in rebus adversis LB V / CWE 69
Oratio de pace: Oratio de pace et discordia LB VIII
Oratio funebris: Oratio funebris in funere Bertae de Heyen LB VIII / CWE 29

Paean Virgini Matri: Paean Virgini Matri dicendus LB V / CWE 69
Panegyricus: Panegyricus ad Philippum Austriae ducem LB IV / ASD IV-1 / CWE 27
Parabolae: Parabolae sive similia LB I / ASD I-5 / CWE 23
Paraclesis LB V, VI / ASD V-7
Paraphrasis in Elegantias Vallae: Paraphrasis in Elegantias Laurentii Vallae LB I / ASD I-4
Paraphrasis in Matthaeum, etc LB VII / ASD VII-6 / CWE 42–50
Peregrinatio apostolorum: Peregrinatio apostolorum Petri et Pauli LB VI, VII
Precatio ad Virginis filium Iesum LB V / CWE 69
Precatio dominica LB V / CWE 69
Precationes: Precationes aliquot novae LB V / CWE 69
Precatio pro pace ecclesiae: Precatio ad Dominum Iesum pro pace ecclesiae LB IV, V / CWE 69
Prologus supputationis: Prologus in supputationem calumniarum Natalis Bedae (1526), or Prologus supputationis errorum in censuris Bedae (1527) LB IX / ASD IX-5
Purgatio adversus epistolam Lutheri: Purgatio adversus epistolam non sobriam Lutheri LB X / ASD IX-1 / CWE 78

Querela pacis LB IV / ASD IV-2 / CWE 27

Ratio: Ratio seu Methodus compendio perveniendi ad veram theologiam (Methodus for the shorter version originally published in the Novum instrumentum of 1516) LB V, VI

Responsio ad annotationes Lei: Responsio ad annotationes Eduardi Lei LB IX / ASD IX-4 / CWE 72
Responsio ad Collationes: Responsio ad Collationes cuiusdam iuvenis gerontodidascali LB IX / CWE 73
Responsio ad disputationem de divortio: Responsio ad disputationem cuiusdam Phimostomi de divortio LB IX / ASD IX-4 / CWE 83
Responsio ad epistolam Alberti Pii: Responsio ad epistolam paraeneticam Alberti Pii, or Responsio ad exhortationem Pii LB IX / ASD IX-6 / CWE 84
Responsio ad notulas Bedaicas (*see* Notatiunculae)
Responsio ad Petri Cursii defensionem: Epistola de apologia Cursii LB X / Ep 3032
Responsio adversus febricitantis cuiusdam libellum LB X

Spongia: Spongia adversus aspergines Hutteni LB X / ASD IX-1 / CWE 78
Supputatio: Supputatio errorum in censuris Bedae LB IX
Supputationes: Supputationes errorum in censuris Natalis Bedae: contains Supputatio and reprints of Prologus supputationis; Divinationes ad notata Bedae; Elenchus in censuras Bedae; Appendix respondens ad Sutorem; Appendix de scriptis Clithovei LB IX / ASD IX-5

Tyrannicida: Tyrannicida, declamatio Lucianicae respondens LB I / ASD I-1 / CWE 29

Virginis et martyris comparatio LB V / ASD V-7 / CWE 69
Vita Hieronymi: Vita divi Hieronymi Stridonensis *Opuscula* / CWE 61

This page intentionally left blank

Index of Biblical and Apocryphal References

References in this index are identified according to the Vulgate order, but book names and numbers are those given in the text, which are those of the Canon of Trent. Where Vulgate numbering differs from that of Trent, the Vulgate numbers are given in parenthesis – for example Psalm 118(117):1(2) is a reference to Psalm 118:1 which is numbered 117:2 in the Vulgate.

Genesis

1 256 n42, 1034 n77
1:1 1072 n296, 1076 n338, 1079 n374, 1082 n394
1:1–10 918 n1107
1:2 1077 n363, 1080 n381
1:3 1077 n362, 1080 n380
1:6–7 1077 n362
1:21 1080 n382
1:22 1079 n375, 1091 n462
1:26 704 n1236, 802 n425, 1080 nn383–4
1:26–31 998 n1642
1:27 1080 n382, 1091 n466
1:28 229, 929 n1182, 969 n1408, 1000 n1650, 1079 n375, 1091 n461
1:29–30 1093 n481
1:31 1080 n379
2:7 878 n893, 1082 n399, 1091 n460
2:8–9 998 n1642
2:15 1079 n376
2:16 1079 n376
2:16–17 1079 n377
2:17 1031 n53, 1092 n470
2:18 551 n429, 1092 n477, 1103 n568
2:18–24 1099 n537
2:23 891 n962
2:24 551 n429, 915 n1094, 987 n1528, 1079 n376
3 259 n66, 1098 n529
3:1 23 n25
3:1–5 528 n330, 600 n667
3:1–7 954 n1299
3:5 1031 n53
3:7 1092 n474
3:8 192 n574, 528 n331
3:16 1092 n476, 1093 n478
3:19 891 n959
3:21 317 n493
3:22 836 n616
3:22–4 802 n422
3:23–4 1031 n58
3:24 361 n737, 1089 n456
4:1 1079 n378
4:1–16 1092 n475
4:3–4 683 n1124
4:6 760 n166
4:8 1093 n479
4:8–16 787 n338
4:19 928 n1178
4:19–24 787 n339
4:23 929 n1180
4:26 786 n333, 958 n1337, 1094 n491
5:1–6:3 1093 n485
5:6–11 958 n1337
5:21–7 773 n255
5:23–4 1094 n490
5:25–31 928 n1178

6:6 192 n574
6:6–7 955 n1314
6:7 206, 896 n1010
6:9 1093 n486
6:12 1094 n492
6:14–16 924 n1155
6:14–22 920 n1126
6:15–16 530 n344
6:21 530 n345
6–8 787 n335, 1093 n487
6–9 918 n1110
7:1–3 528 n332
7:2 925 n1161
7:8–9 528 n332
7:14–16 528 n332
7:31 828 n558
7–8 399 n1002, 1093 n489
8:17 1091 n463
9:1 1091 n463
9:1–4 1093 n481
9:3–5 1093 n484
9:20–1 1093 n482
9:20–7 1095 n502
9:22–7 1093 n483
11:1–9 1095 n504
12:3 1005 n1693
12:7–8 1095 n501
12–25 1094 n493
13:5–7 1094 n497
13:8 1095 n501
13:8–9 1102 n562
13:10 1095 n498
13:12 1095 n498
13:14–17 1095 n499
13:16 829 n571
14:18–20 310 n431
14:20 430 n1228, 431 n1242
15:1–21 1095 n499
16:1–5 970 n1410
16:1–16 1095 n507
16:7 1095 n503
16:14 1095 n503
17:1 1071 n295
17:5 632 n851, 1068 n252, 1094 n494
17:5–7 938 n1222
17:9 1068 n252
17:10–14 1096 n512
17:15 632 n851, 1068 n252, 1094 n495
17:16–21 1095 n506
17:17 1094 n496
17:19 938 n1227
18 201, 934–7
18:1 939 n1231
18:2 939 n1233, 1089 n451
18:6 938 n1230
18:10 939 n1233
18:10–14 555 n451
18:14 939 n1235
18:17 939 n1233
18:17–19 939 n1236
18:19 939 n1237
18:21 955 n1315
18:23 939 n1233, 939 n1238
19 576 n564
19:2 1089 n455
19:9 1095 n500
19:24–5 1026 n16
19:24–8 1095 n500
19:30–8 499 n161, 582 n590
20:1–7 499 n157
20:10–18 499 n159
21:1–7 938 n1227
21:7–8 1096 n514
21:8 1096 n516
21:14–15 1096 n509
22 1039 n119
22:1–10 294 n320
22:1–15 529 n338
22:6–10 1039 n123
22:11 1068 n252
22:12 884 n929
22:15 1068 n252
22:15–18 1042 n140
22:18 1005 n1693
22:62 26 n38
25 782 n303
25:22–8 555 n452
27:41–5 1102 n563
27–8 782 n303
28:3 1071 n295
29:16–27 955 n1310
29:20–8 527 n323
29:23–4 918 n1108
30:1–24 969–70
30:14–16 969 n1406
30:14–18 527 n326
30:15–16 918 n1108
30:26 970 n1413

30:27 970 n1412
30:31–43 527 n324
30:32–43 970 n1411
30:37–43 955 n1309
31:9 527 n325
31:19 1070 n275, 1071 n288
31:30–5 527 n325
31:36–55 1102 n564
32:29 1066 n237
32:30 1066 n238, 1066 n239
35:11 1071 n295
35:18 632 n852
36:20–30 411 n1097
39:7–12 558 n469
41:26–7 894 n992
42 793 n376
49:8–12 1074 n323
49:11 830 nn572–4
49:29–30 983 n1503

Exodus

3:2–6 1067 n251
3:6 1072 n298
3:8 296 n329, 831 n584, 1036 n98
3:13 1072 n299
3:14 897 n1013, 1065 n231
3:15 1072 n299
3:17 831 n584, 1036 n98
3:18 1072 n297
3:21–2 529 n339
4:14–16 301 n371
6:2–3 1066 n241
7:1 1069 n264, 1070–1 nn279–80
7:8–12 516 n258
7:12 516 n259, 891 n963
7:16 1072 n297
7:20 516 n260
8:6 516 n261
8:17 516 n262
8:19 516 n263, 1069 n265, 1077 n358
10:13 1033 n65
12:3–11 1038 n114
12:5 317 n492
12:11 941 n1245
12:35–6 529 n339
12:46 399 n998, 1038 n113
13:5 831 n584, 1036 n98
14:22–9 679 n1111
16 971 n1414
16:35 296 n328
17:1–6 1034 n75
17:5–7 215 n710, 985 n1516
17:6 399 n1000, 953 n1295
19:5–6 996 n1625
19:6 302 n377
19:16 412 n1109
19:18 412 n1109
19:21–5 301 n371
19–20 26 n38
20:3 1032 n64
20:12 583 n597, 983 n1495, 1050 n179
20:14 1033 n67, 1034 n81
20:15 982 n1491, 1033 n67
20:16 601 n679
20:17 1033 n67
20:22–6 1032 n64
20:24 921 n1131
21:12–27 1033 n66
21:23–5 1035 n85
22:20 413 n1118
22:25 592 n637
22:28 1070 n271, 1071 nn284–5
22:31 417 n1155
25:6 319 n517
25:7 387 n888
25:18–20 361 n737, 1089 n456
25:30 871 n861
25–8 700 n1210
26:30 304 n391
26–7 683 n1125
28 310 n434, 767 n209
28:1 301 n371
28:1–43 303 n384, 304 n388
28:4 309 n427, 310 n436, 311 n441, 311 n444, 312 n447, 318 n500
28:4–42 309 n426
28:7–10 310 n428
28:9 310 n428
28:12 312 n450
28:15 312 n447
28:15–30 312 n451
28:16 207
28:30 313 n452
28:31 317 n491, 317 n499

28:31–5 311 n438
28:32–3 311 n440
28:33–4 318 n503
28:35 311 n445
28:36 313 n454, 314 n460
28:36–7 314 n464
28:36–9 311 n444
28:38 313 n455
28:39 311 n441
28:40 311 n441, 311 n444
28:41 303 n379
28:42 317 n490
29:1–6 302 n378
29:2 319 n516
29:4 303 n384
29:7–21 303 n386
29:8–9 303 n384
29:9–10 319 n510
29:10 319 n511
29:15 319 n510
29:28–9 303 n384
29:28–35 430 n1229
29:35 303 n379
29:35–7 304 n391
30:30 303 n384
30:34–8 319 n517
31:1–11 310 n432
31:13–15 413 n1118
32 918 n1111
32:9 65 n170, 302 n373, 342 n654, 1043 n144
32:11 956 n1319
32:11–14 1039 n120
32:29 303 n379
33:3 65 n170, 302 n373, 1036 n98
33:5 302 n373
33:11 1081 n390
33:20 1067 n246
34:9 302 n373, 1043 n144
34:29–30 412 n1110
34:33–5 316 n489, 939 n1232, 953 n1296, 959 n1349, 1085 n417
35:2 413 n1118
35:28 319 n517
35:30–5 310 n432
36 683 n1125
37:7–9 361 n737
38:3 319 n512
39:1–30 310 n434
39:30 313 n454

Leviticus

1–7 401 n1016, 953 n1297
2:4 319 n516
3:2 319 n510
3:8 319 n510
3:13 319 n510
7:12 319 n516
8:8 313 n452
8:9 311 n444, 313 n454
8:13 309 n426
8:35 304 n392, 306 n400
10:1–2 320 n519
10:9 309 n423
10:10–11 309 n424
11 953 n1297
11:46–7 319 n514
11:47 402 n1023
12:6–8 401 n1019
13–14 961 n1368
14:34–57 401 n1020
14:57 402 n1023
16:1 320 n519
16:4 309 n426
18:6–18 1035 n84
18:20 1034 n81
19:9–10 434 n1258
19:20–2 401 n1021
20:10 601 n680, 1034 nn81–2
20:13–14 413 n1118
20:24 296 n329
21:7 431 n1239
21:10 303 n379, 303 n386, 304 n390
21:10–12 306 n402
21:10–15 306 n403
21:12 305 n393
21:13–15 309 n422
21:17–24 421 n1187
21–2 307 n407
22 309 n421
22:4–6 309 n419
22:18–24 301 n366
23 401 n1016
23:11 321 n528
24:5–9 999 n1647
24:20 1035 n85
25:8–22 1036 n91

25–6 319 n518
27:30–1 431 n1242

Numbers

3:4 320 n519
4:13 319 n513
6:15 319 n516
7:89 361 n737
16:31–5 918 n1112
16:35 401 n1018
16:46–50 401 n1018
18:2 430 n1233
18:3 413 n1118
18:21 430 n1228
18:21–32 430 n1233
18:24 431 n1242
18:28 431 n1242
18:29–31 430 n1230
20 215
20:2–13 1034 n75
20:6 1074 n322
20:7–13 215 n710, 985 n1516
20:8–11 1074 n322
20:11 399 n1000
21 212 n693, 919 n1114
21:6–9 952 n1293, 1034 n74
22 139 n286, 283 n249
22:1–40 429 n1225
22:20–2 388 n896
22:28 283 n251
22:28–30 322 n535
22:30 842 n662
22–24 270 n142
25:7–11 635 n875
26:61 320 n519
28:21 431 n1242
28–9 401 n1016
32:16 921 n1130
33:1–49 477 n52
35:2–8 430 n1231

Deuteronomy

2:7 296 n328
3:1–7 212 n693, 919 n1114
4:2 334 n606, 915 n1096
4:7 619 n783
5:12–15 394 n963
5:13–15 1037 n107
5:16 392 n937, 583 n597, 1050 n179
6:3–9 976 n1449
6:5 314 n463, 803 n435, 1045 n155
6:6–8 942 n1257
6:16 1049 n175
7 212 n693, 1036 n99
7:10 919 n1114
8:3 315 n469, 390 n911
9:13 302 n373, 342 n654
10:16 442 n1291, 1043 n144
10:17 1069 n266
11:10–14 1028 n33
11:14–15 319 n518
11:21 319 n518
11:23 1036 n100
11:23–5 319 n518
12:6 431 n1242
12:11 431 n1242
13 402 n1022
14 953 n1297
14:22 431 n1242
15:6 1036 n100
15:21–3 319 n515
17:8–11 402 n1024
17:11 399 n1008
18:1–2 431 n1237
18:1–5 430 n1228
18:3 703 n1232
18:31 393 n947
18:33 393 n947
19:1 1036 n100
19:19 601 n679
19:21 1035 n85
20:5 1036 n95
20:8 1036 n96
21:18–21 976 n1447
21:21 413 n1118
22:9 1000 n1654
22:10 202, 212, 582 n591, 971 n1418, 1000 n1653
22:11 202, 582 n592, 1000 n1652
22:20–1 1035 n86
22:22 601 n680, 1034 nn81–2
23:19–20 592 n637
23:25 999 n1647
24:1 1000 nn1648–9
24:1–4 602 n681, 1034 n83
24:7 1036 n94

24:10–25:16 1036 n90
24:12–13 1036 n93
24:17 1036 n92
24:19–22 1036 n97
25:4 335 n613, 703 n1230, 1000 n1655
27:26 411 n1100
28:1–13 319 n518
28:4 921 n1130
28:12 1028 n33
28:66 915 n1093
30:20 553 n443
31:3 1036 n100
31:27 1043 n144
32:16–42 684 n1131
32:39 1069 n262

Joshua
2:1 921 n1128
3:9 302 n374
4:1–5 302 n374
6 410 n1081
6:4 410 n1083
6:5 410 n1086
7 918 n1113
10 212 n693, 919 n1114
10:7 324 n554
13:22 388 n896
20:1 302 n374
24:1–28 302 n374

Judges
1:1–7 1102 n565
13:18 1066 n240
14:14 931 n1196
15:8 762 n179
16:1–31 918 n1109
16:4–20 527 n327

1 Samuel
7:3 553 n443
8 342 n655
8:10 302 n374
10:11–13 388 n897
10:17–18 302 n374
14:20–42 312 n451
15:1–2 302 n374
15:16 302 n374
16:1–13 997 n1628
17 643 n919, 971 n1416
17:4–7 785 n326
17:12–58 785 n327
18:27 929 n1181
19:1–7 562 n491
19:24 391 n931
20:4–42 562 n491
20:30 774 n261
21:2–7 999 n1647
21:6 871 n861
21:13 922 n1142
21:14 922 n1142
23:2–4 324 n554
24:1–23 1039 n121
25:25 632 n850
26:1–25 1039 n121
27:3 891 n966
30:5 891 n966
30:7–8 312 n451
30:8 324 n554

2 Samuel
1:21 26 n37
2:20 891 n966
3:13–16 929 n1181
5:7 921 n1133
5:19–25 324 n554
6:1–8 919 n1115
6:6–7 320 n521
6:16–23 519 n279
11 558 n471, 558 n473, 634 n874
11–12:25 529 n340
12 558 n473
12:1–4 664 n1038
12:13 559 n476
12:23 573 n545
12:24–5 631 n849
14:11 363 n752
15:2 976 n1448
15:26 825 n539
19:1–7 784 n317

1 Kings
1 Kings 698 n1202
1:1–4 527 n329
2:6 259 n66
2:10 853 n733
6:23–35 361 n737
6–8 683 n1127
10:1–10 709 n1258
12:1–19 1102 n567
15:5 634 n874

18:27 505 n198, 835 n612
22:19 984 n1506

2 Kings
2 Kings 698 n1202
2:11 958 n1337
22:8–20 381
24:6 979 n1471

1 Chronicles
3:17 978 n1460
13:9–11 320 n521
22:25–9 921 n1129

2 Chronicles
2 Chronicles 979 n1466
3–6 921 n1129
12:14 323 n548
18:21–2 342 n658, 371 n809
19:7 881 n909
21:2 979 n1469
21:17 979 n1467
22:1 979 n1468
23:11 381
24:20 381
26:16–21 320 n520
29:21–4 319 n511
35:11–12 921 n1127, 921 n1132
36:8 979 n1471

2 Esdra
3:4 979 n1472
7:65 295 n324

Tobias
3:25 1090 n457
4:16 64 n169, 1017 n1761, 1084 n411
5:17 1090 n457
6:10–8:20 519 n278
11:9 417 n1155
12:15 1090 n457
13:2 259 n66, 276 n193

Judith
9:17 1072 n296
13:24 1072 n296

Esther
3:2 1089 n452

Job
1:1 318 n502
1:8 318 n502
2:3 318 n502
2:9–10 519 n277
5:10 1028 n33
19:25–6 964 n1381
34:30 342 n656
38:32 292 n303

Psalms
1:2 34 n65
1:6 893 n982
2:9 713 n1282
6:1(2) 956 n1319
7:10 276 n192, 884 n928
8:5(6) 1070 n270, 1071 n283
12(11):2(3) 257 n56
12(11):6(7) 258 n59
13(12):1 956 n1320
14 78 n3
14(13):1 954 n1302
14(13):3 996 n1622
15:10 1038 n117
16(15):10 399 n1001, 1004 n1681
18:2 255 n32
18(17):10(11) 361 n737
18(17):11(12) 1067 n243
19:1 255 n32
19(18):1(2) 512 n233, 635 n878
19(18):4(5) 410 n1077
21(20):3(4) 984 n1507
22(21) 398 n997
22(21):1(2) 986 n1524
22(21):6(7) 1076 n349
23(22):5 304 n390
24(23):7 948 n1279
24(23):10 1071 nn293–4
26(25):4 942 nn1253–4
27(26):13 964 n1382
32(31):1 27 n42
33:1 922 n1141
34(33):1(2) 998 n1639
34(33):8(9) 367 n782
34(33):11 513 n234
36(35):9(10) 1074 nn321–2
37(36):25 56 n143
37(36):30 870 n856
38(37):22(23) 1074 n318
40(39):7(8) 296 n332
42(41):2–3 973 n1425

44(43):23 956 n1318
44(43):24 956 n1320
45(44):1(2) 292 n310
45(44):2(3) 991 n1581
45(44):3(4) 984 n1509
45(44):7(8) 304 n390, 984 n1507
47(46):9(10) 1071 n282
47(46):10 1070 n269
48(47):8(9) 1071 n294
49(48):12(13) 405 n1039
50:14 157 n380
50(49):16–17 299 n353
50(49):18 417 n1151
50(49):19 299 n353
51(50) 67 n178, 558 n473
51(50):10(12) 260 n76, 267 n129, 292 n308, 322 n545
51(50):10–12 (12–14) 263 n98
51(50):11(12) 1077 n356
51(50):12(14) 157 n380, 267 n127, 371 n808, 1077 n357
51(50):13(15) 261 n77
51(50):17 25 n31
53(52):1 954 n1302
55(54):22(23) 56 n143
57(58):5–6 381 n853
57(56):7(8) 298 n345
65(64):1(2) 1067 n242
67:1 896 n1011
68(67) 417–19, 984 n1508
68(67):11(12) 272 n158
68(67):18(19) 992 n1596
69(68):5(6) 987 n1525
69(68):12(13) 976 n1446
71(70):2 896 n1011
75(74):3(4) 892 n976
77(76):15(16) 896 n1011
78(77):65 956 n1318
79(78):7 892 n971
80(79):4(5) 514 n242, 1071 n293
80(79):7(8) 1071 n293
80(79):8–19 (9–20) 960 n1355
80(79):14(15) 1071 n293
82(81):1 254 n26, 1069 n268, 1071 n281
82(81):6 253 n19, 254 nn23–4, 387 n886, 417 n1155, 692 n1163, 1070 n273, 1071 n286
84(83):8(9) 1071 n293
87(86):3 619 n789
88(87):1 1074 n318
89(88):8(9) 1071 n293
89(88):19–21 (20–2) 997 n1626
89(88):27(28) 997 n1627
89(88):29(30) 997 n1629
89(88):35–7 (36–8) 997 n1630
91(90):6 414 n1132
91(90):13 955 n1313
92(91):12(13) 824 n529, 870 n855
94(93):1 1072 n302
96(95):5 1071 n289
105(104):15 910 n1075
107(106):20 416 n1146
107(106):25–6 776 n276
110(109):1 398 n993, 711 n1267, 1072 n308
110(109):4 310 n431
111(110):10 318 n501, 889 n948
113:9 177
114(113):3–7 841 n652
115(113):1 (9–10) 177 n486, 304 n389, 560 n480
118(117):22 1074 n324, 1101 n551
118(117):24 508 n213, 532 n351
119(118):164 998 n1638
121(120):1 26 n38
122(121):3 409 n1069
125(124):1 26 n38
128(127):3 392 n938
130(129) 67 n178
132(131):7 896 n1011
133(132):1 1103 n575
133(132):1–3 304 n390
133(132):3 293 n317
136(135):2 1069 n266
139(138):7–8 277 n194
140(139):3(4) 416 n1143
144(143):15 1071 n292
147(146) 635 n878
149:1 409 n1068

Proverbs

1:7 318 n501, 889 n948
3:5 393 n952

3:15 440 n1284
3:24 418 n1159
6:6 521 n284
6:26 870 n850
8:15 841 n651
8:17 297 n337
8:22 841 n650, 921 n1137, 976 nn1443–4
8:34 297 n338
8:35 297 n339
10:1 256 n41
11:2 405 nn1042–3
12:18 416 n1144
13:14 1074 n322
13:24 1052 n187
14:27 1074 n322
15:1 416 n1145, 954 n1301
15:15 336 n778, 569 n527
16:1 139 n290, 323 n547
16:22 1074 n322
17:22 870 n853
18:19 1103 n571
18:21 416 n1142
19:17 771 n233
20:15 870 n851
30:25 955 n1311

Ecclesiastes
Ecclesiastes 250 n5
1:1 252 n11
1:12 250 n5, 252 n11
3:1–15 641 n910
3:5 929 n1185
4:10 1103 n570
10:20 830 nn575–7
12:9–10 641 n910

Song of Solomon
Song of Solomon 213, 291
1:4–5 920 n1123
1:5 994 n1607
1:7 405 n1038
1:8 291 n299
3:1–3 920 n1124
4:12 920 n1125
5:1 957 n1325
6:7 957 n1324
7:8 478 n53

Wisdom of Solomon
1:11 643 n921
4:1 619 n784
4:8 427 n1213
6:26 371 n812
7–9 371 n811
16:13 259 n66
16:15 276 n193

Ecclesiasticus
1:8 1072 n296
1:16 889 n948
1:28 269 n134
2:12 257 n57, 269 n134
3:33 870 n849
4:12 245 n12
19:13–15 318 n504
24:12 976 n1442, 1072 n296
24:14 512 nn231–2, 921 n1136, 976 n1442, 976 n1444
25:2 1103 n572
27:6 373 n825
27:12 870 n852
30:24 800 n416
31:11 409 n1068
37 963–4
42:17 1071 n295
44:1–50:29 503 n182
44:15 409 n1068
44:16 958 n1337
51 503 n182

Isaiah
1:3 708 n1253, 778 n289, 891 n967
1:18 825 n537
2:2 984 n1505
3:14 960 n1359
3:24 789 n354
5:1–4 275 n180
5:1–8 959 n1345
5:2 960 n1357
5:7 960 n1356, 960 n1358
5:25 956 n1319
6:1 984 n1506
6:1–13 361 n736
6:2 1089 n456
6:2–7 553 n440
6:3 1071 n294
6:5 1071 n294

6:5–8 300 n359
6:6–7 260 n70, 267 n129, 1089 n456
6:8 300 n360
8:16–19 324 n559
8:20 387 n889
9:1 978 n1462
9:14–15 333 n598
10:22 977 n1457
11:2 1083 n409
11:2–3 80 n11, 139 n287, 140 n295, 158 n382, 159 n389, 513 n234, 1077 n361
11:4–5 380 n852
11:6 984 n1509
12:2 1075 n332
13:20 997 n1633
14:11–12 997 n1631
14:12–13 23 n24
14:14 997 n1632
21:6 413 n1126
21:8 411 n1094
21:11 411 n1097
24:2 293 n313
28:16 1074 n324, 1101 n551
29:16 713 n1282
30:14 713 n1282
30:15 418 n1159
38:11 964 n1383
40:1–2 412 n1115
40:3 323 n549
40:6 408 n1059, 410 n1079
40:6–9 409 n1066
40:8 408 n1061
40:9 408 n1058, 409 n1065, 410 n1079
40:11 409 n1073
42:16 994 n1608
42:17 994 n1609
43:25 887 n940
46:8 553 n443
48:22 409 n1067
50:4 294–7, 339 n640, 371 n813
50:5 298 nn342–3
50:6 298 n344
50:7–8 298 n347
50:9 298 n348
52:7 409 n1074, 412 n1104
52:8 411 n1093
52:9–10 412 n1114
52:14–53:5 394 n962
53 991 n1583
53:2 991 n1580
53:5–6 413 n1119
53:7 639 n896, 992 n1584
53:7–8 1038 n115
54:13 157 n379
56:10 331 n589, 417 n1153
57:19 1005 n1689
57:21 409 n1067
58:1 180, 410 n1080, 574 n555
59:1 962 n1369
60:8 293 n314
61:1 1037 n106, 1038 n112
61:1–2 398 n994
61:10 994 n1604
62:3 363 n749
62:6 411 n1096, 417 n1153
62:6–7 414 n1130
64:4 336 n780
64:8 713 n1282
64:9 956 n1319
65:2 275 n178
65:14 411 n1098
65:20 620 n792

Jeremiah

1:5 893 nn984–5
1:9 298 n350
1:9–10 299 n351
2:13 1074 n322
3:3 208
4:3–4 442 n1289
4:4 442 n1291
4:27 978 n1458
5:8 788 n347
5:24 1028 n33
12:10 960 n1360
17:10 276 n192
18:6 713 n1282
19:11 713 n1282
24:7 553 n443
25:27 957 n1326
31:19 765 n198

Lamentations

3:28 955 n1312

Baruch
3:34–5 841 n653
3:36 878 n895
3:38 878 n896

Ezekiel
1:1–28 1086 n430
1:15–21 961 n1364
3:9 384 n869
3:18–21 330 n583
10 361 n737
13:7 372 n817, 372 n820
16:40 601 n680
18:4 411 n1099
18:23 525 n308
18:31 323 n546
28:11–19 831 n580
31 831 n578
33:6 414 n1128
34:1–10 330 n584
34:10 71 n197
36:20–3 330 n581
36:22 995 n1618
36:25 995 n1619
36:26 260 n74
37:11 964 n1380
37:11–14 964 n1379
40 213
40–3 961 n1365
44:15–31 306 n402
44:23 402 n1023
44:24 402 n1024

Daniel
3:51–90 501 n170
4:7–8 831 n581
4:24 368 n789
4:30–1 396 n980
7:9 1068 n259
7:13–14 1076 n343
12 291
12:3 291 n301, 292 n304, 292 n307
14:4 1072 n296

Hosea
1:2 527 n328
1:9 996 nn1624–5
2:23–4 996 n1625
4:6 385 n875
4:8 895 n1000
9:14 393 nn946–7
10:12 442 n1292
13:14 783 n310

Joel
2:14 514 n242
2:15 514 n242
2:21 293 n315
2:23–4 293 n316
2:28–32 873 n872, 1003 nn1666–8, 1038 n116
2:32 1005 n1689

Amos
1–2 372 n817
3:8 183, 514 n240
7:15 139

Jonah
Jonah 24–5
2:1–10 205 n643
2:1–11 959 n1341, 1037 n102
3:9 25 n30
3:10 324 n556

Micah
4:1 984 n1505
6:3–5 841 n649
6:16 342 n654, 342 n659, 371 n809, 372 n819

Habakkuk
2:1 414 n1129
3:7 513 n235, 950 n1287

Zechariah
1:3 533 n357
1:9 1089 n455
3:3–4 987 n1526
3:7 987 n1527
7:12 384 n869
10:2 332 n592
11:15 332 n596
11:16 332 n593
11:16–17 342 n657
11:17 331 n590, 332 nn594–5
13:7 843 n671

Malachi
1:1–3 782 n303
1:6 701 nn1217–18
2:7 254 nn20–1
4:2 339 n643, 410 n1084, 1074 n320

2 Maccabees
7 861 n784

Matthew
1:11 979 n1470
1:12 254 n22
1:18–25 554 n450
1:20–5 988 n1540
1:21 696 n1189
1:23 1073 n310, 1083 n405
2:2 989 n1546
2:7 989 n1546
2:9 989 n1546
2:13 391 n927
2:13–21 989 n1549
3:1–4 290 n287
3:2 31 n53, 791 n365, 929 n1186
3:3 323 n549, 393 n955
3:6 8
3:7 562 n486, 791 n363, 960 n1353
3:9 274 n175, 960 n1354
3:10 791 n364, 791 n366, 929 n1184, 959 n1352
3:11 300 n363, 942 n1258, 1077 n358
3:11–16 681 n1115
3:12 931 n1193, 1023 n7
3:13–17 990 n1557, 1078 n364
3:14 393 n955, 1085 n419
3:15 36 n71, 1087 n432
3:16 1027 n22, 1050 n182, 1067 n249
3:17 418 n1168, 990 n1559, 1068 n253
4:1 990 n1561
4:1–11 582 n589
4:2 940 n1244
4:4 315 n469, 390 n911
4:7 1049 n175
4:13 426 n1211, 882 n911
4:17 791 n365
5:1 408 n1063, 758 n146
5:1–2 882 n918
5:1–12 285 n263
5:3 285 n263, 431 n1238
5:4 285 n266
5:5 285 n265
5:6 286 n267, 390 n915, 442 n1293
5:9 392 n941
5:13 349 n681
5:13–14 253 n19
5:14 253 n18, 409 n1071
5:16 299 n356
5:17–18 1030 n49, 1087 nn432–3
5:20 292 n307
5:23–4 308 n411, 1102 n561
5:29 393 n950, 954 n1304
5:29–30 333 n599
5:30 954 n1304
5:32 413 n1120
5:33–7 853 n731
5:34 604 n693
5:34–7 552 n436, 975 n1435
5:37 511 n225
5:39 832 n593, 957 n1327
5:40 833 n595, 957 n1329
5:41 832 n594
5:44 804 n437, 943 n1263
5:45 526 n318, 908 n1069, 1023 n7, 1028 n32–3, 1051 n183
5:46–8 1045 n154
5:48 908 n1068, 1085 n421
6:1–4 69 n189
6:1–18 1088 n445
6:2 696 n1185
6:3 566 n510, 833 n597
6:5 696 n1183
6:6–7 833 n598
6:9–13 526 n319, 618 n781
6:10 412 n1105, 1101 n551
6:16 696 n1184
6:16–18 635 n879
6:19–24 310 n430
6:20–1 343 n662
6:24 273 n167, 360 n732, 694 n1171
6:25–6 369 n793
6:25–34 336 n617
6:26 521 n285, 1028 n30

6:26–9 430 n1232
6:28–9 521 n286, 1028 n31
6:30 1042 n138
6:31–3 369 n793
6:31–4 397 n983
6:33 56 n143, 362 n740
7:1 609 n723
7:3 533 n355
7:6 280 n233, 962 n1371
7:7 535 n373, 853 n732
7:7–11 323 n552
7:9 663 n1032
7:12 64 n169
7:14 295 n327
7:15 278 n204, 419 n1177
7:15–20 421 n1185
7:16 511 n228
7:17–20 1046 n158
7:22–3 389 n898
7:23 892 n978
8:1–4 402 n1023, 961 n1368
8:2–4 30 n51
8:4 4
8:8 315 n482
8:10 1042 n138
8:20 1085 n422
8:23–91 990 n1563
8:24–7 900 n1566
8:28–34 882 n910, 966 n1391, 1028 n34
8:29 603 n689
9:2 392 n939, 412 n1111, 706 n1245, 966 n1394, 967 n1396
9:2–7 30 n51
9:2–8 159 n389, 881–90
9:3–5 991 n1571
9:6 236, 888 n946, 967 n1400, 1085 n422
9:9 395 n973, 979 n1473
9:10 977 n1450
9:10–11 307 n409
9:12 422 n1194
9:14 290 n288
9:15 321 n528
9:16 442 n1295
9:17 260 n75, 442 n1294
9:18–26 991 n1576
9:19 882 n911
9:20–22 30 n51
9:22 886 n936, 886 n939
9:23–5 308 n410
9:24 307 n406
9:33 892 n968
9:36 799 n412, 991 n1577
9:37–8 119 n182, 259 n63, 361 n734
9:38 245 n14, 357 n716
10:5 983 n1497
10:6 315 n482
10:9–10 369 n794
10:16 278 n206, 292 n309
10:20 892 n972
10:26–31 390 n917
10:28–30 333 n599
10:29 797 n398
10:29–31 430 n1232, 521 n285, 1001 n1656
10:37–9 306 n399
10:38 365 n761, 941 n1246
10:39 941 n1249
10:41 368 n788
11:5 391 n925
11:7–15 290 n288
11:9 387 n885
11:11 387 n887, 777 n282
11:12 212, 914 n1088
11:12–13 1030 n48
11:13 390 n906
11:15 296 n333
11:19 271 n153
11:23 882 n913
11:28 243 n5, 515 n247, 743 n75, 990 n1554
11:29 359 n729
11:29–30 383 n865
12:1–5 999 n1646
12:2–4 871 n861
12:10–13 881 n906
12:10–14 702 n1220
12:11 259 n67
12:22 991 n1569
12:24 900 n1568
12:26–8 702 n1221
12:28 991 n1569
12:31–2 900 n1029
12:33 285 n262
12:34 413 n1117
12:38–45 709 n1257

12:40 398 n991, 827 n557, 959 n1341, 998 n1637, 1037 n105
12:42 709 n1258
12:46–50 695 n1178
12:48 822 n514
12:48–50 762 n175
12:50 392 n942
13 280 n234, 703 n1231, 771 n239, 806 n445
13:2–3 883 n920
13:3–8 927 n1172
13:3–9 926 n1167
13:3–40 358 n723
13:8 928 n1175
13:9 296 n333
13:12 266 n123
13:24–6 358 n718
13:24–30 272 n159, 373 n822, 959 n1344, 1023 n7
13:24–39 894 n991
13:25–30 395 n975
13:27 442 n1288
13:31 521 n287
13:31–2 336 n618
13:36–51 528 n336
13:37 275 n179, 442 n1288
13:38 442 n1288, 894 n995
13:44 407 n1054
13:45–6 360 n733
13:47–9 1023 n7
13:47–50 994 n1606
13:47–52 743 n73
13:48 925 n1162
13:52 388 n891, 416 n1148
13:53–8 978 n1462
13:55 393 n956
13:57 426 n1210
14:14 391 n924
14:15–21 990 n1562
14:17–21 395 n971
14:23 990 n1558
14:24–34 990 n1564
14:28–31 990 n1565
14–15 69 n189
15:10–20 287 n271
15:15–20 528 n336
15:18–19 256 n46
15:19 255 n36
15:24 315 n482
15:26 986 n1519
15:28 986 n1520, 1042 n138
15:29 882 n918
15:32–8 395 n971, 990 n1562
16:6 372 n821, 959 n1344
16:11–12 372 n821
16:12–13 1086 n427
16:14 387 n884
16:14–16 1085 n416
16:15–19 947 n1271
16:16–19 144
16:18 276 n188, 696 n1190
16:18–19 232 n812
16:19 5
16:20 1004 n1678
16:21 638 n892
16:21–3 261 n84
16:21–5 420 n1182
16:22–3 638 n893
16:23 261 n85
16:24 365 n761
16:27 1085 n422
17 26 n39
17:1 998 n1635
17:1–9 991 n1582
17:4 262 n86
17:5 990 n1559
17:6 392 n933
17:10–12 958 n1337
17:16 743 n74, 819 n494, 843 n670
17:19 1042 n138
17:23–6 900 n1567
17:24–5 305 n398
18:1 262 n87
18:3 984 n1513
18:11 315 n482
18:15 318 n504
18:22 998 n1640
18:32 335 n610
18:35 1085 n421
19:3–9 551 n430
19:3–12 1091 n468
19:4–6 1099 n537
19:5 915 n1095
19:8 602 n682, 817 n483, 1000 n1649, 1043 n144
19:12 940 n1242, 953 n1298, 954 n1306, 1000 n1651, 1092 n469

19:19 803 n436
19:21 367 n786, 431 n1238
19:23–4 431 n1238
19:24 550 n419
19:27 868 n839
19:28 368 n787
19:29 392 n944, 569 n526, 798 n401
20:1–7 370 n804
20:1–16 369 n797, 960 n1361
20:16 339 n638
20:18–19 638 n892
20:20–8 261 n83
20:26–7 385 n874
21:9–10 475 n38
21:11 387 n884
21:18–20 517 n265
21:25–6 702 n1219
21:33–46 960 n1362
21:42 1101 n551
21:42–3 1074 n324
21:46 387 n884
22:14 339 n638
22:16 405 n1041
22:17–22 305 n397, 991 n1570
22:31–2 964 n1379
22:32 1072 n298
22:37 314 n463, 803 n435, 1045 n155
22:39 803 n436
22:41–6 398 n993, 711 n1267
23 419 n1176
23:2–3 900 n1028
23:5 696 n1182, 942 n1256, 976 n1449
23:10 39 n80
23:11 385 n872
23:11–12 385 n874
23:12 875 n878, 906 n1056
23:13 743 n71
23:13–35 333 n602
23:15 376 n839
23:23 743 n71
23:25 743 n71
23:27 517 n267, 743 n71
23:29 743 n71
23:31–2 562 n487
23:37 782 n301
24:3 882 n918
24:3–14 914 n1085
24:3–50 390 n907
24:11 372 n818, 701 n1214
24:12 313 n457, 349 n684, 356 n711
24:24 372 n818, 701 n1214, 958 n1336
24:36 390 n910
24:44 958 n1338
24:45 277 n200, 280 n232
24:45–51 275 n184
25:1–13 928 n1177, 1046 n157
25:12 893 n983
25:14–29 960 n1363
25:14–30 266 n124, 366 n771, 375 n829, 407 n1055
25:15–20 274 n174, 274 n176
25:21 280 n232
25:21–3 266 n124, 438 n1281
25:23 280 n232
25:29 266 n123
25:32–3 255 n38
25:32–46 390 n908
25:35–40 663 n1032
25:40 663 n1035, 936 n1214
25:41 320 n525, 892 n979
25:43 938 n1224
26:3 947 n1272
26:3–44 990 n1558
26:6 891 n964
26:14–16 874 n874
26:14–25 365 n766
26:17–29 921 n1132
26:21–6 318 n507
26:26 390 n913, 897 n1014, 923 n1152
26:28 320 n523
26:29 479 n62
26:35 758 n148, 947 n1271
26:41 317 n496, 954 n1300
26:45 505 n199, 835 nn610–11, 982 n1485
26:47–50 874 n874
26:51–2 639 n895
26:52 594 n648
26:56 290 n289, 420 n1182
26:57 365 n763
26:57–8 947 n1272
26:57–65 992 n1584
26:60–2 415 n1139
26:61 827 n557, 959 n1342

26:63–4 992 n1585
26:64 394 n960, 1076 n343
26:67 663 n1033, 991 n1579
26:69–75 215 n705, 262 n92, 290 n290, 558 n472, 873 n871, 944–8
26:75 873 n873
27:1–2 270 n143
27:2–24 416 n1140
27:3–5 582 n588, 874 n875
27:5 948 n1277
27:6 429 n1226, 912 n1080
27:11–26 270 n143
27:20–3 603 n685
27:22 1006 n1694
27:22–3 290 n292, 365 n768
27:24 862 n791
27:31–3 765 n203, 766 n204
27:40 827 n557
27:42 887 n944
27:44 890 n953
27:45 992 n1588
27:46 398 n997, 986 n1524
27:50 992 n1589
27:51–3 992 n1591
27:52–3 958 n1333
27:59 989 n1544
27:59–60 992 n1593
27:63 827 n557
28:2 992 n1594
28:9 377 n841
28:16 26 n39
28:16–20 1091 n464
28:18–20 1078 n367
28:19 237, 392 n935, 410 n1078, 983 n1498, 1085 n426
28:19–20 410 n1077
28:20 375 n831, 1038 n111

Mark

1:2–8 290 n287
1:3 323 n549
1:9–11 990 n1557, 1078 n364
1:10 1050 n182, 1067 n249
1:11 418 n1168, 990 n1559, 1068 n253
1:12–13 582 n589
1:13 990 n1561
1:23–4 389 n900
1:40–4 402 n1023
1:40–5 961 n1368
2:1–12 881 n905, 882 n915, 884 n926, 886 n935
2:3 883 n922
2:5 884 n927, 886 n939
2:6–7 991 n1571
2:7 887 n942
2:11 888 n946
2:14 979 n1473
2:15–16 307 n409
2:17 882 n914
2:18 290 n288
2:20 321 n528
2:21 442 n1295
2:22 442 n1294
2:23–8 702 n1220
2:27 511 n227, 713 nn1277–8, 858 n765
3:1–6 881 n906
3:22 900 n1568
4 771 n239
4:1–20 959 n1344
4:9 296 n333
4:24–5 266 n123
4:30–2 336 n618
4:31 521 n287
4:33–5:21 990 n1563
4:36–40 900 n1566
4:40 1042 n138
5:1–20 966 n1391, 1028 n34
5:2–7 389 n900
5:6–7 603 n689
5:22–43 308 n410, 885 n932
5:25–34 30 n51
5:35–43 991 n1576
5:39 307 n406
5:40 426 n1206
6:1–6 978 n1462
6:4 426 n1210
6:7 531 n348
6:13 391 n924
6:15 387 n884
6:35–44 395 n971
6:37–44 990 n1562
6:47–51 990 n1564
7:3–4 680 n1114
7:4 696 n1186
7:11 429 n1226
7:11–13 912 n1080
7:14–23 287 n271

7:21 255 n36, 256 n46
7:27 986 n1519
7:29 986 n1520
8:1–9 395 n971, 990 n1562
8:15 372 n821
8:28 387 n884
8:30 1004 n1678
8:31 638 n892, 827 n557, 998 n1637
8:32–3 638 n893
8:34 365 n761, 941 n1246
8:35 368 n790, 941 n1249
9:1–8 991 n1582
9:5 262 n86
9:6 990 n1559, 1068 n253
9:22 885 n933
9:30 827 n557
9:34 262 n87
9:42 393 n950, 954 n1304
9:46 954 n1304
9:49 349 n681
10:2–12 551 n430, 1099 n537
10:5 817 n483, 1043 n144
10:7 915 n1095
10:17–25 333 n601
10:17–30 310 n430
10:21 367 n786, 431 n1238, 758 n147
10:25 550 n419
10:28 868 n839
10:28–30 179
10:33–4 638 n892
10:34 827 n557
10:35–45 261 n83
11:8–10 475 n38
11:30–3 702 n1219
12:1–12 960 n1362
12:10 1101 n551
12:13–17 305 n397
12:14–17 991 n1570
12:26 1072 n298
12:29 314 n463
12:30 803 n435, 1045 n155
12:35–7 398 n993
12:41–4 696 n1184
13:3–13 914 n1085
13:4–8 390 n907
13:26 394 n960
13:33 317 n496
14:12–26 921 n1132
14:17–21 318 n507
14:22 897 n1014
14:27 420 n1182
14:31 634 n873
14:32–9 990 n1558
14:38 954 n1300
14:50 290 n289
14:53–64 992 n1584
14:55–9 415 n1139
14:58 959 n1342
14:61–2 992 n1585
14:62 1076 n343
14:65 991 n1579
14:66–72 215 n705, 262 n92, 290 n290, 558 n472, 944–8
15:1–15 270 n143, 416 n1140
15:13 1006 n1694
15:13–14 290 n292, 365 n768
15:13–24 766 n204
15:15 991 n1579
15:21 765 n203
15:25 983 n1500
15:31 887 n944
15:32 890 n953
15:33 992 n1588
15:34 986 n1524
15:37 992 n1589
15:38 992 n1591
15:46 989 n1544, 992 n1593
16:3–4 992 n1594
16:14 817 n483
16:15 229, 983 n1498, 1091 n464
16:17–18 711 n1271
16:18 73 n200
16:19 264 n101, 993 n1597

Luke

1 554 n450
1:11–20 555 n453
1:26 1090 n457
1:26–35 988 n1540
1:27 1073 n310, 1076 n347, 1083 n405
1:28 536 n376, 731 n33
1:41 555 n454
1:41–4 989 n1541
1:42 536 n377
1:46–55 916 n1099
1:48 405 n1042, 916 n1097

1:54 892 n969
1:67–79 989 n1542
2:1 832 n586
2:11 1075 n332
2:12 989 n1543
2:13–14 412 n1102
2:14 502 n173, 536 m378, 989 n1545
2:21 989 n1547
2:25–38 989 n1547
2:46–8 989 n1550
2:49 990 n1551
3 698 n1202
3:1–20 290 n287
3:4 323 n549
3:8 929 n1186
3:9 929 n1184, 959 n1352
3:10 411 n1089
3:16 300 n363, 681 n1115
3:21–2 990 n1557, 1078 n364
3:22 418 n1168, 990 n1559, 1050 n182, 1067 n249
3:27 979 n1470, 979 n1472
4:1–13 582 n589
4:2 940 n1244, 990 n1561
4:4 315 n469, 390 n911
4:6 394 n960
4:12 1049 n175
4:16–30 978 n1462
4:18 201
4:18–21 1038 n112
4:24 426 n1210
4:29–30 991 n1574
4:33–5 389 n900
4:43 369 n792
5:12 392 n933
5:12–14 402 n1023
5:12–15 961 n1368
5:14 35 n68
5:17 881 n908, 884 n931
5:17–26 159 n389, 881–90
5:20 392 n939, 886 n936, 886 n939, 967 n1396
5:21 887 n942
5:24 888 n946
5:26 889 n947
5:27 979 n1473
5:29 883 n921
5:29–30 307 n409
5:31 422 n1194
5:33 290 n288
5:35 321 n528
5:36 442 n1295
5:37–8 442 n1294
6:2–4 871 n861
6:6–11 881 n906
6:12 990 n1558
6:20 431 n1238
6:27 943 n1263
6:27–8 804 n437
6:29 832 n593, 957 n1327
6:31 64 n169
6:35 804 n437, 943 n1263
6:41 533 n355
6:44 285 n262
6:45 413 n1117
7:7 796 n395
7:11–15 308 n412
7:11–17 307 n404
7:16 387 n884
7:24–5 822 n512
7:24–35 290 n288
7:26 1085 n420
7:31–2 822 n513
7:36–50 377 n840, 743 n72, 784 n316, 947 n1274
7:37 559 n474
7:37–50 884 n925
7:39 387 n884, 559 n474
7:47 70 n192
7:48 887 n941
7:48–9 392 n939
7:48–50 706 n1246
8:2 559 n474
8:4–15 959 n1344
8:8 296 n333
8:18 266 n123
8:19–21 762 n175
8:22–37 990 n1563
8:23–5 900 n1566
8:26–39 882 n910, 1028 n34
8:27–8 389 n900
8:37 966 n1391
8:40–56 991 n1576
8:41–55 308 n410
8:52 307 n406
9:2–3 369 n794
9:8 387 n884
9:10–17 395 n971
9:13–17 990 n1562

9:18 990 n1558
9:19 387 n884
9:21 1004 n1678
9:22 638 n892
9:23 365 n761, 941 n1246
9:28 998 n1636
9:28–36 991 n1582
9:33 262 n86
9:35 990 n1559, 1068 n253
9:46 262 n87
9:54 262 n88
9:55 262 n89
10:2 95, 245 n14, 357 n716
10:3 278 n204
10:7 369 n796
10:15 832 n592
10:22 315 n483
10:27 803 n435, 1045 n155
11:2 412 n1105, 1101 n551
11:9 535 n373, 853 n732
11:9–13 323 n552
11:14 991 n1569
11:15 900 n1568
11:20 991 n1569, 1077 n358
11:29–32 959 n1341
11:31 709 n1258
11:37–53 883 n921
11:41 368 n789, 505 n200
12:1 372 n821
12:6–7 1001 n1656
12:13–16 305 n396
12:15–34 310 n430
12:22–4 369 n793
12:24 1028 n30
12:27 521 n285
12:29–30 369 n793
12:33 367 n786
12:33–4 343 n662
12:35 941 n1245
12:35–48 275 n184
12:41–8 528 n336
12:42 277 n200, 278 n205, 407 n1054
12:42–4 275 n182
12:43 277 n201
13:9 791 n366
13:15–16 708 n1255
13:18–19 336 n618
14:2–5 708 n1256
14:11 875 n878, 906 n1056
14:12–15 421 n1190
14:26 306 n399, 583 n598, 942 n1259, 954 n1305, 983 n1496
14:27 365 n761
14:33 834 n603
15:1 977 n1450
15:11–32 406 n1045, 793 n377, 951 n1290
15:16 971 n1420
15:17 406 n1046
15:22 27 n40
16:1–10 529 n341
16:8 339 n642
16:9 360 n732
16:13 273 n167, 310 n430, 360 n732, 694 n1171
16:16 1030 n48
16:19–31 333 n601
16:21 417 n1155
17:5 55 n140
17:11–19 961 n1366
17:14 22 n17
17:16 392 n933
17:21 394 n961, 1024 n11
17:33 941 n1249
18:1 322 n539, 833 n599, 940 n1241
18:7 833 n596
18:8 1042 n138
18:11 533 n354
18:13 26 n35
18:18–25 333 n601
18:20 982 n1491
18:22 367 n786, 431 n1238
18:24 758 n147
18:25 550 n419
18:28 868 n839
18:31–3 638 n892
18:60–2 559 n477
19:5 369 n798
19:10 315 n482
19:11–27 375 n829, 407 n1055
19:12–24 274 n174
19:12–27 366 n771
19:22 335 n610
19:22–3 688 n1148
19:26 266 n123
19:36–40 475 n38
19:40 776 n273

19:41 991 n1575
20:4–6 702 n1219
20:9–19 960 n1362
20:21 405 n1041
20:21–5 305 n397
20:21–6 991 nn1570–1
20:36 253 n17, 254 n22, 392 n941
20:37 1072 n298
20:41–4 398 n993
21:6–36 390 n907
21:7–36 914 n1085
21:18 363 n752
21:34 269 n136
21:36 317 n496, 940 n1241
22:3–5 365 n766
22:7–38 921 n1132
22:15 923 nn1150–1
22:19 897 n1014
22:21–3 318 n507
22:32–3 947 n1271
22:38 144
22:39 638 n894
22:41–5 990 n1558
22:43 1089 n448
22:44 810 n457
22:54–62 215 n705, 262 n92, 944–8
22:55–62 290 n290
22:56–62 558 n472
22:61 758 n148
22:62 5
22:66–71 415 n1139
22:69 1076 n343
23:1–24 416 n1140
23:1–25 270 n143
23:6–12 365 n762
23:8–11 862 n790
23:12 1102 n558
23:20–3 766 n204
23:21 290 n292, 365 n768, 1006 n1694
23:24–5 862 n791
23:25–7 765 n203
23:32–43 992 n1587
23:34 639 n897, 1051 n184
23:35 887 n944
23:39–43 890 n953
23:41 572 n544
23:44 992 n1588
23:45 992 n1591
23:46 992 n1589
23:49 290 n289
23:53 989 n1544, 992 n1593
24:2 992 n1594
24:19 387 n884
24:27 316 n488, 398 n988
24:30–2 390 n913
24:31–3 143 n303
24:32 170 n447, 316 n488
24:46 277 n201
24:47 639 n898
24:51 264 n101, 993 n1597

John

1:1 128 n230, 253 n16, 254 n29, 255 n34, 258 n60, 857 n757, 1075 n335, 1076 n338, 1082 n394, 1083 n406
1:1–2 980 n1481
1:3 981 n1482, 1082 n395
1:3–5 857 n758
1:4–5 310 n429
1:6 1075 n329, 1085 n419
1:9 131 n244, 310 n429, 408 n1060, 1074 n321
1:9–10 901 n1032
1:10 901 n1033
1:12 253 n17, 938 n1223
1:14 258 n60, 1073 n311, 1076 n345, 1089 n454
1:14–18 263 n96
1:18 418 n1169, 1067 n247
1:23 323 n549
1:25–6 681 n1115
1:29 271 n152, 317 n492, 393 n955, 990 n1560, 1076 n345
1:31–4 1078 n364
1:32 1027 n22, 1050 n182, 1067 n249
1:32–3 263 n97
1:36 271 n152, 317 n492, 393 n955, 1076 n345
1:42 632 n853
1:47 691 n1159
2:1–10 1096 n511
2:1–11 551 n430, 990 n1553, 1096 n510

2:18–22 959 n1342
2:19 827 n557, 965 n1384, 1004 n1680
2:19–20 998 n1637
2:20 965 n1384
3:5 393 n948
3:5–6 1090 n459
3:7 984 n1512
3:8 394 n966, 879 n900
3:12 855 n744
3:13 988 n1536
3:14 394 n963, 398 n990, 1034 n74
3:14–15 205 n643, 959 n1340, 1037 n103
3:16 803 n429, 938 n1229, 988 n1537
3:17 901 n1032
3:19 901 n1032
3:23 978 n1464
3:31 409 n1072
4:6–7 990 n1552
4:7 938 n1226
4:13–14 1037 n104, 1074 n322
4:14 390 n914, 990 n1555
4:19 387 nn883–4
4:24 882 n917, 897 n1012
4:32 938 n1225
4:44 426 n1210
4:48 1043 n145
5:2–9 30 n51, 638 n891
5:6 638 n891
5:28–9 958 n1334
5:29 964 n1379
5:35 299 n355
5:44 304 n389
5:46 398 n992, 711 n1269
6:1–13 395 n971
6:3 882 n918
6:5–13 990 n1562
6:10 883 n919
6:14 387 n884
6:16–25 990 n1564
6:23–64 898 n1015
6:31–5 391 n918, 398 n995
6:33 390 n912
6:40 320 n524
6:50–1 390 n912
6:54 985 n1514
6:56 390 n916
6:56–9 398 n996
6:59 971 n1415
7:6 638 n889
7:7 394 n962, 901 n1032
7:15 394 n962
7:18 304 n389
7:24 441 n1286
7:37–9 1074 n322
7:38 990 n1556
7:38–9 1037 n104
7:40 387 n884
7:41 882 n912
7:52 882 n912
8:3 601 n680
8:3–5 1034 n82
8:11 706 n1247
8:15 404 n1033
8:16 1085 n421
8:23 901 n1032
8:32 259 n68
8:33–40 695 n1177
8:37 695 n1180
8:39 503 n183, 711 n1272
8:39–44 618 n780
8:44 695 n1179, 1031 n56
8:46 271 n150, 786 n334, 825 n538
8:48 271 n154
8:48–52 900 n1568
8:50 304 n389
8:54 1085 n421
8:56 1066 n235
8:58 1066 n234
9 518 n270, 967 n1395
9:1–41 952 n1292
9:17 387 n884
10:1–8 339 n639
10:11 357 n713, 986 n1523, 1076 n345
10:11–16 151 n345, 259 n67, 314 n465, 345 n668, 433 n1257
10:16 626 n833
10:17–18 992 n1590
10:20–21 900 n1568
10:31 991 n1573
10:33 271 n155
10:34 253 n19, 417 n1155, 692 n1163, 1070 n274

10:34–5 254 nn23–4, 387 n886
11:1–44 30 n51
11:1–45 395 n974
11:5 308 n414
11:11 307 n406
11:25 1075 n330
11:34 991 n1572
11:35 799 n411, 991 n1575
11:36 308 n414
11:39 710 n1264, 799 n414
11:39–45 1086 n430
11:41 758 n149
11:43 991 n1572
11:47–52 339 n639
11:50 342 n656
11:50–2 389 n899
12:1–2 308 n418
12:4–6 370 n799
12:12–14 475 n38
12:24 395 n972
12:25 336 n616, 526 n315, 941 n1249
12:28 1068 n254
12:32 996 n1620, 1102 n559
12:32–6 952 n1293
12:46 796 n392
12:49 892 n973
13:21–30 318 n507, 365 n766
13:23 534 n371
13:28–30 370 n799
14:6 128 n231, 259 n65, 775 n265, 866 n819, 1075 n330
14:13 442 n1287
14:16 993 n1598, 1077 n351
14:17 1077 n360
14:17–21 1102 n556
14:26 993 n1598, 1085 n424
14:30 271 n151
15:1 692 n1161
15:1–5 703 n1229
15:4–5 692 n1162
15:12–13 339 n639
15:14–15 803 n431
15:16 442 n1287
15:18–20 901 n1036
15:19 712 n1273, 901 nn1034–5
15:26 993 n1598, 1077 n350, 1077 n352, 1077 n360
16:7 993 n1598, 1088 n443
16:23 442 n1287
16:26 442 n1287
16:32 420 n1182
16:33 568 n521
17:1 758 n149
17:2 336 n616
17:3 218 n727, 692 n1164, 878 n894, 1072 n307
17:21–2 254 n28
18:1–5 365 n766
18:1–9:42 747 n91
18:8 986 n1522
18:10 634 n872
18:10–11 639 n895
18:12–14 415 n1139
18:13–14 365 n763
18:15–18 262 n92
18:15–27 215 n705, 944–8
18:17 558 n472
18:19–24 365 n763, 415 n1139
18:25–7 262 n92, 290 n290, 558 n472
18:28 365 n763, 988 n1643
18:28–19:16 270 n143
18:29–19:15 416 n1140
19:1–3 991 n1579
19:6 290 n292, 365 n768, 1006 n1694
19:7 887 n943
19:11 1024 n10
19:13–14 983 n1501
19:14–15 766 n204
19:15 416 n1141
19:16 862 n791
19:30 977 n1456
19:33–6 1038 n113
19:36 399 n998
19:40 989 n1544
19:41–2 992 n1593
20:1 992 n1594
20:6–7 989 n1544
20:19 992 n1594
20:22 264 n101, 394 n966
20:22–3 392 n940, 1085 n425
20:23 986 n1521
20:26 992 n1594
21:15–17 143, 144, 151 n345, 277 n195, 314 n465, 345 n668

21:15–18 301 n367
21:17 407 n1053
21:25 832 nn588–90

Acts
1:1–5 1088 n442
1:3 321 n528
1:4–5 321 n528
1:6 264 n102
1:8 280 n235, 410 n1077
1:9 264 n101
1:9–11 993 n1597, 1078 n366, 1086 n428
1:11 390 n909, 393 n957
1:12 26 n39
1:14 321 n528
1:24 1088 n445
2 123, 804 n440, 873 n872
2:1–2 921 n1134
2:1–4 261 n81, 262 n91, 264 n103, 412 n1107, 420 n1183, 470 n17, 519 n280, 1078 n366, 1083 n408, 1086 n429, 1098 n528
2:1–5 261 n82
2:1–14 262 n93
2:1–41 993 n1598
2:2–4 261 n79, 290 n291, 320 n522, 394 n959, 394 n966
2:3 1027 n23, 1077 n358
2:3–4 534 n370, 963 n1377, 1067 n250
2:4 283 n249, 293 n312, 301 n365, 310 n433, 388 n893
2:4–12 396 n978
2:4–13 139 n286
2:7 301 n365
2:12 1005 n1687
2:14 411 n1090, 515 nn253–4
2:14–40 137, 758 n150
2:14–41 411 n1092
2:16 1038 n116
2:17 1003 n1667
2:21 1003 n1668
2:22 1003 nn1673–4
2:23 1003 n1669
2:24 1004 n1679
2:25 1005 n1684
2:27 399 n1001, 1004 n1681
2:29 838 n629, 1005 n1685
2:29–30 1005 nn1682–3
2:29–31 399 n1001
2:32 1078 n365
2:34–5 1005 n1684
2:36 1004 n1675
2:36–8 1005 n1687
2:37 411 n1091
2:39 1005 nn1688–9
2:40 579 n572, 1003 n1672
2:41 262 n94, 396 n979
2:42 1099 n536
2:46 418 n1161
3:13 1004 n1676, 1005 n1691, 1008 n1704, 1072 n298
3:16 373 n823
3:17–18 1003 n1670
3:17–26 579 n571
3:18 1005 n1692
3:22–6 387 n884
3:25–6 1005 n1693
4:11 1101 n551
4:12 966 n1389
4:19 825 n536, 907 n1066, 1017 n1760
4:31–2 1098 n528
4:32 622 n809
5:1–10 787 n341
5:1–11 274 n171
5:11–13 274 n171
5:12–16 270 n145
5:13 270 m144
5:29 668 n1052, 825 n536, 907 n1066
5:40 264 n104
5:40–1 397 n984
5:41 264 n105
6:7 1042 n138
7:15–16 983 n1503
7:16 983 n1502
7:22 530 n347
7:32 1072 n298
7:37 387 n884
7:55 1076 n343
8:6–15 362 n747
8:12 328 n575
8:14–18 401 n1014
8:17 362 n742

8:17–18 303 n380
8:18–24 303 n383
8:20–3 580 n575
8:26–40 1091 n465
8:30–5 1038 n115
8:32 1076 n345
8:32–3 639 n896
8:38 328 n575
9:1–8 984 n1504
9:3–5 987 n1529
9:10–19 321 n532
9:18 328 n575
9:36–42 396 n977
10 265 n113, 1087 n436
10:9–11:18 1087 n439, 1087 n441
10:24–6 265 n112
10:28–36 1085 n416
10:43 320 n523
11:27–8 396 n982
13:9 632 n854, 979 n1474
13:16 1005 n1686
13:38 412 n1101
14:7–17 265 n111
14:11 325 n564
14:14 1072 n296
14:26 1042 n138
15:1–30 1087 n437
15:1–33 918 n1105
15:10 41 n85
15:13–21 1087 n438
16:3 1087 n434
16:16–19 389 n901
16:22–5 265 n110
17:16–21 1006 n1696
17:16–34 280 n229, 523 n301
17:18 1006 nn1697–8
17:22 1007 nn1699–1700
17:22–3 280 n229
17:22–31 138
17:23 1007 nn1701–2
17:24 1008 n1705
17:24–5 1008 n1708
17:25 1101 n550
17:26 1008 n1710
17:27–8 1010 n1718
17:28 1009 n1713, 1065 n230
17:29 1009 n1712, 1010 n1719
17:30 579 n573, 1010 nn1720–2, 1011 n1724
17:31 1010 n1723, 1011 n1726
17:32 1011 n1728
17:33 1011 n1729
17:34 1011 n1730
18 290
18:3 362 n741, 422 n1195
18:18 1087 n435
18:24–6 290 n295
18:24–8 290 n294
19 290
19:1–5 290 n293
19:1–7 291 n297
19:7 291 n296
19:18 4
19:23–40 365 n765
20:20 334 n605
20:21 393 n952
20:28 151 n345, 314 n465, 345 n668
20:29 278 n204, 428 n1219
20:32 118 n178
20:34 433 n1254
21:8–15 396 n982
21:10–15 397 n984
22:3 325 n563
22:22–9 603 n691
22:25–9 626 n835
23:5 1070 n272, 1071 n285
23:11 393 n945
24:16 393 n945
26:1–3 523 n303
26:12–20 984 n1504
26:14 987 n1529
26:18 796 n392
27:34 363 n752
28:3–6 517 n264

Romans

Romans 114
1:1 899 n1022
1:1–2 1072 n306
1:2–5 676 n1097
1:3–4 956 n1322
1:5 906 n1057
1:7 903 n1047
1:8 833 n600
1:11 391 n923, 1077 n355
1:14 382 n859
1:16–17 676 n1097
1:19–20 1081 n388
1:20 1067 n244

1:21 1027 n25
1:21–2 388 n892
1:26–8 576 n563
1:28 799 n413, 857 n755
1:30 906 n1061
1:46 981 n1484
2:5 817 n483
2:5–6 279 n213
2:11 881 n909
2:12–29 1033 n68
3:4 280 n231, 1031 n57
3:21 280 n231
3:21–8 1030 n51
3:22–6 412 n1112
3:23 853 n729
3:27 822 n511, 1030 n50
3:27–4:25 938 n1222
3:28 994 n1611, 1019 n1768
4 1096 n513
4:1 981 n1483
4:2 994 n1611
4:5 236 n828, 967 n1398
4:6 994 n1611
4:11–25 696 n1181
4:13–22 1094 n493
4:15 713 n1279, 1030 n50, 1033 n70, 1092 n471
4:18 1044 n149
4:22–3 1093 n488
5 280 n227
5:1 967 n1398
5:1–2 705 n1241
5:4 362 n745
5:5 254 n28
5–8 962 n1374
5:12 823 n519
5:12–21 260 n73
5:17 394 n961
5:17–26 236 n828
5:21 394 n961
6:4 337 n621, 1020 n1773
6:6 303 n381, 679 n1110
6:14 1019 n1768, 1033 n70
6:17–20 303 n381
6:19 908 n1070
6:23 1030 n47, 1077 n355
7 817 n479
7:2 668 n1054
7:5 908 n1070
7:7 853 n730
7:7–8 894 n996, 908 n1072
7:7–11 995 n1612
7:7–13 1041 n133
7:14 943 n1265
7:14–15 985 n1518
7:14–20 1054 n200
7:18 908 n1070
8:1 704 n1237, 908 n1070
8:1–15 995 n1615
8:3–4 908 n1070
8:14 392 n941
8:14–16 46 n104
8:15 315 n470, 406 n1047, 1071 n287, 1077 n360
8:15–17 254 n28, 254 n30, 255 n31
8:16 253 n17, 254 n22
8:17 393 n943, 393 n954
8:18 573 n551, 1045 n152
8:19 1032 n62
8:21 412 n1106, 680 n1112
8:23 681 n1118
8:24–5 1044 n151
8:26 1077 n354
8:26–39 892 n975
8:27 261 n80, 276 n192
8:28 1071 n287
8:31–2 514 n246
8:31–9 1054 n201
8:32 1048 n168, 1072 n305
8:34 1077 n353
9 919 n1116
9:1 393 n945
9:3 315 n476, 583 n599
9:4 1071 n287
9:7 1095 n506
9:13 782 n303
9:20 720 n1308, 727 n14
9:21 25 n32, 713 n1282
9:30–2 994 n1611
10:2 852 n728, 1015 n1752
10:4 225, 1033 n72
10:6–13 399 n1005
10:8–10 255 n36, 256 n46
10:10 413 n1116
10:12 619 n782
10:12–13 1005 n1690
10:14–17 132
10:17 118 n178, 259 n62, 392 n934, 729 n27, 1090 n459

10:18 410 n1077
10:21 275 n178
11:6 709 n1262, 994 n1611
11:11–13 923 n1149
11:13 370 n801, 407 n1052
11:13–14 337 n623
11:16 246 n16
11:23–32 966 n1388
11:33 386 n880
12:1 570 n531, 703 n1234, 914 n1091, 1017 n1762, 1034 n78
12:1–2 1096 n513
12:4–5 775 n271, 1099 n534
12:5 143
12:8 418 n1161, 859 n775, 890 n951
12:10 904 n1050
12:12–26 322 n539
12:13 626 n832
12:15 315 n472
12:18–19 1103 n573
12:19–21 1033 n66
12:20 954 n1308, 956 n1316, 984 n1511
12:21 69 n188
13:1 386 n876
13:1–7 413 n1123, 580 n576, 593 n643, 907 n1064
13:1–10 1024 n10
13:2 626 n831
13:4 413 n1124
13:7 376 n836, 386 n876, 848 n695
13:9 803 n436
13:12 297 n335, 641 n904
13:12–13 414 n1131
14:11 8
14:13 640 n902
14:15 697 n1198
14–15:6 1038 n110
14:17 336 n779
14:20 697 n1198
15:4 301 n368, 322 n538, 769 n219
15:6 1095 n505
15:13 410 n1087
15:18–20 367 n784
15:19 410 n1087
15:25 903 n1047
15:26–7 362 n739
15:33 1072 n300
15:41 302 n375
16:5 626 n833
16:18 696 n1187
16:20 1072 n300
16:23 891 n965
16:26 906 n1057
16:27 1068 n255

1 Corinthians

1:2 903 n1047
1:7 1077 n355
1:10 1017 n1762
1:15–20 280 n231
1:17 142, 145 n316
1:18–25 1011 n1725
1:18–31 528 n335
1:22–3 1043 n145
1:23 923 n1148
1:23–5 899 n1024
1:24 127 n227, 253 n15, 1025 n15, 1075 n331, 1075 n334
1:26–8 624 n818
1:26–31 1096 n513
1:30 995 n1616, 1075 n331
1:31 430 n1227
2:2 279 n221, 1080 n386
2:4 1073 n314
2:6 1080 nn385–6
2:6–7 419 n1172
2:6–16 279 n220
2:8 315 481
2:9 336 n780, 599 n663
2:10 276 n192, 527 n321, 1073 n314, 1077 n358
2:11 1073 n314
2:12 1073 n314
2:13 301 n369, 387 n890, 1073 n314
2:13–15 396 n981
2:14 1073 n314
2:15 36 n72
3:1–2 391 n920, 620 n793
3:1–3 279 n215
3:2 279 n222, 1096 n515
3:4–6 290 n295
3:6–8 119 n182, 259 n63

3:6–9 275 n181
3:13 301 n364
3:16 803 n432, 910 n1076
3:16–17 1073 n313
3:16–19 703 n1233
3:17 697 n1198
3:19 1025 n15
3:21 322 n542
3:22–3 798 n404
3:22–4 704 n1239
4:1 134 n261, 260 n72, 277 n199
4:1–2 277 n196, 375 n830
4:2 275 n182
4:6 322 n543
4:8–13 428 n1216
4:9 568 n520
4:10 506 n201
4:12 335 n612, 336 n773, 433 n1254
4:14 279 n212
4:18 322 n543
4:19 322 n543
4:21 279 n211
5:1 318 n506, 787 n340
6:2 1071 n287
6:4 835 n613, 982 n1486
6:11 1077 n359
6:12 138 n280, 279 n208, 284 n256, 421 n1193
6:12–20 431 n1240
6:15 405 n1040, 406 n1048, 408 n1057, 663 n1034, 775 n271
6:19 569 n528, 703 n1233, 775 n271, 910 n1076
7:1 413 n1122
7:7 433 n1253
7:8 413 n1122
7:9 644 n924
7:10–16 943 n1261
7:14 1077 n359
7:15 41 n89
7:18–26 1096 n513
7:25 279 n218
7:25–38 413 n1122
7:25–40 279 n216
7:27–8 927 n1173
7:29 641 n905, 929 n1183
7:33–4 917 n1102
7:35 279 n217, 697 n1195
7:39 668 n1054, 903 n1046
7:39–40 413 n1121
7:40 321 n530, 1014 n1744
8:1 697 n1196, 791 n367, 898 n1016
8:5–6 1070 n277
8:8 287 n270
8:9 36 n71
9:1 422 n1195
9:5 431 n1236
9:7 335 n614
9:7–14 702 n1227
9:9 335 n613, 1000 n1655
9:9–10 279 n219, 703 n1230
9:12 337 n628, 422 n1195
9:13 427 n1215, 703 n1232
9:15 406 n1049, 422 n1195
9:15–18 351 n693
9:16 275 n185, 315 n467, 370 n802
9:16–17 276 n186
9:16–19 433 n1255
9:16–27 529 n342
9:17 315 n468
9:18 337 nn626–7, 428 n1218
9:19 266 nn120–1, 274 n176, 276 n187, 315 n477, 422 n1195, 572 n539
9:19–22 337 n625, 359 n725, 370 n803, 814 n470
9:21 315 n477
9:22 284 n255, 337 n624, 420 n1181, 572 n539
9:23 422 n1196
9:24 400 n1009
9:24–7 286 n269
9:25 336 n775
9:27 285 n260, 914 n1089
10:1–11 279 n219
10:3–4 894 n994
10:4 358 n724, 399 n1000, 894 n993, 959 n1347, 1074 n324
10:13 272 n161
10:16 390 n913
10:16–17 1099 n536
10:22 421 n1193
10:23 279 n208

10:25–6 287 n270
10:33 36 n71, 125, 895 n1003
11:3 857 n756
11:16 442 n1290
11:17 697 n1197
11:17–33 362 n743
11:19 146 n320, 373 n823
11:22 440 n1285
12 384 n871, 410 n1087, 698 n1201
12:3 947 n1275
12:7 697 n1195
12:12 1099 n534
12:12–14 801 n420
12:12–26 143, 1099 n535
12:12–27 775 n271
12:13 619 n782
12:27 408 n1057
12:28 322 n536, 920 n1122, 927 n1171
12:28–9 133
12:31 1028 n35
13:1 88 n49
13:1–13 280 n226, 419 n1178
13:9–12 1086 n430
13:10–11 324 n558
13:12 409 m1070, 1081 n392
13:13 511 n226, 1054 n201
14:1 322 n536, 372 n816
14:1–3 386 n881
14:1–5 391 n929
14:3 173, 180
14:4–5 388 n894
14:5 133 n258, 173
14:6 697 n1195
14:23 391 n930
14::24–5 411 n1088
14:25 276 n192, 392 n933
14:31 173 n460
14:32 138, 138 n284, 324 n557, 497 n149, 810 n459
14:33 1072 n300
14:37 133 n257
14:38 308 n416, 893 n987
15:3–8 1088 n442
15:9 279 n209, 916 n1098
15:10 279 n210, 560 n480
15:21–2 992 n1592
15:22 260 n73, 269 n135
15:24–8 987 n1531
15:28 1025 n14
15:31 718 n1300, 974 n1431
15:33 415 n1138, 712 n1274
15:41 291 n302
15:45 260 n73, 1076 n344
16:1 1083 n410
16:1–4 362 n739

2 Corinthians

1:3 1072 n301, 1074 n319
1:4 362 n746
1:8 362 n746
1:12 393 n945, 418 n1161
1:23 718 n1301
2:1–4 71 n196
2:6 1093 n480
2:6–8 308 n413
2:8 1017 n1762
2:14 407 n1050, 438 n1281
2:15 503 n186, 560 n479
3 336 n772
3:4–5 325 n561
3:6 719 n1303, 954 n1303, 957 n1323
3:7–4:6 939 n1232, 1085 n417
3:7–18 316 n488
3:13–16 959 n1349
3:14–16 316 n489
3:17 412 n1106, 412 n1113, 1077 n360
4:2 393 n945
4:4 272 n160, 1070 n276, 1071 n290
4:5–7 899 n1021
4:5–15 325 n561
4:7 266 n122, 407 n1054, 807 n449
4:16–18 336 n776
5:1 320 n524
5:1–4 626 n834
5:11–21 1101 n554
5:16 306 n401, 394 n964, 404 n1033
5:17 519 n280, 1091 n465
5:17–21 412 n1103
5:18–20 336 n619
5:19–20 376 n838
5:21 893 n981, 893 n990, 894 nn998–9, 1076 n347
6:2 641 n903

6:4 898 n1020, 1027 n29
6:7–10 840 nn643–4
6:13 279 n212
6:14 796 n392
6:14–15 709 n1261
6:15 909 n1073
6:16 703 n1233, 910 n1076
7:3 279 n214, 399 n1003
7:8–12 532 n353
7:10 69 n189
8:2 418 n1161
8–9 362 n739
8:9 561 n484
8:17 890 n951
9 428 n1216
9:5 431 n1241
9:11 418 n1161
9:13 418 n1161, 906 n1058
10:7 420 n1180, 441 n1286
10:8 697 n1196, 898 n1016
10:10 266 n117
10:15–17 367 n784
10:17 430 n1227
11:6 1013 n1740
11:7 336 n773, 337 n627, 362 n744, 428 n1218
11:7–12:13 836 n621
11:9 428 n1220
11:12–13 1012 n1733
11:13 318 n505, 696 n1191
11:13–15 399 n1007
11:14 566 n512, 604 n694
11:16–33 787 n337
11:17 279 n209
11:18 404 n1033
11:19 1013 n1734
11:22 513 n237
11:23 337 n629
11:23–4 957 n1328
11:25 264 n104
11:28 315 n466
11:29 315 n473
11:30 1013 n1737
11:31 718 n1299
12 336 n777
12:2 1013 n1738
12:2–10 265 n108
12:4 367 n781
12:7 908 n1071
12:7–11 279 n209
12:9 265 n107, 1013 n1737
12:10 1027 n29
12:11 1013 n1739
12:11–12 1014 n1743
12:13 835 nn614–15
12:15 315 n475
12:16 836 n619
12:21 71 n196
13:2 279 n211
13:4 375 n831
13:10 697 n1196
13:11 1072 n300
14:32 139

Galatians

1:8 314 n461
1:10 314 n462, 712 n1275, 895 n1002, 898 n1016
1:12 895 n1001, 946 n1270
1:13 697 n1198
1:20 718 n1298
1:23 697 n1198
2 321 n533
2:5 691 n1158
2:11 279 n223
2:14 691 n1158
2:16 994 n1611
2:16–21 705 n1241
2:20 415 n1136
3 279 n225
3:1 567 n518, 697 n1199, 808 n452, 1015 n1751
3:1–5 838 n630
3:1–13 995 n1615
3:1–14 1093 n488
3:2 713 n1280
3:6–9 1094 n493
3:6–29 938 n1222
3:10 411 n1100
3:13 1019 n1768, 1033 n70, 1076 n348
3:15–29 395 n969
3:16 394 n965, 959 n1350
3:19 822 n510
3:26 253 n17, 254 n22
3:26–8 315 n482
3:28 619 n782, 619 n790, 1005 n1690, 1091 n467
4:5 315 n470, 681 n1118, 1071 n287

4:5–6 253 n17, 254 n22
4:12 1017 n1762
4:13 265 n116, 266 n117
4:14 265 n114
4:15 265 n115, 567 n519
4:19 279 n212, 315 n474, 391 n928, 750 n106, 801 n419
4:20 315 n478, 743 n76
4:21–5:1 205
4:21–31 919 n1116, 932 n1200, 1096 n511
4:22–4 959 n1348
4:22–6 399 n999, 408 n1062
4:24 316 n487
4:24–6 933 n1207
4:28–9 1095 n508
4:28–31 1095 n506
4:30 1096 n509
5:2 971 n1419
5:2–4 280 n231
5:6 54 n137, 995 n1613
5:7 567 n517, 1015 n1750
5:11 1087 n440
5:14 803 n436
5:17 316 n485
5:19–21 902 n1041
5:22 362 n745, 902 n1042
5:24 908 n1072
5:26 285 n264
6:2 41 n88
6:6 392 n936
6:6–7 336 n615
6:8–9 641 n906
6:10 638 n890
6:12 404 n1033
6:13 50 n120
6:14 322 n542, 336 n777, 512 n230, 827 n556, 901 n1040, 902 n1043
6:15 1091 n465

Ephesians

1 280 n230
1:5 315 n470, 681 n1118
1:7 320 n523, 923 n1151
1:15 393 n952
1:21 1089 n456
1:22 1029 n44
2:4 1101 n552
2:6 891 n958
2:7–10 322 n541
2:9 322 n542, 994 n1611
2:10 995 n1614
2:13–22 1029 n39
2:16 376 n838, 412 n1103
2:20 1101 n552
2:21 703 n1233
2:21–2 910 n1076
3:2 276 n190
3:6 533 n356, 775 n271
3:16 391 n921
4:1 570 n532
4:1–16 1098 n526, 1099 n531
4:4 1099 n534
4:8 394 n958, 992 n1596
4:12–13 1089 n449
4:12–16 1030 n46
4:13 75 n204, 368 n791, 619 n791
4:13–15 145 n313
4:15 236, 254 n27
4:15–16 1099 n534
4:22 679 n1110
4:24 1091 n465
4:25 533 n356, 775 n271
4:26 640 n901
5:2 1076 n347
5:5 611 n732
5:8 640 n902
5:11–12 619 n787
5:14 522 n293, 949 nn1281–2
5:19 501 n169, 531 n350
5:20 1048 n166
5:21–6:9 246 n18
5:21–33 578 n570, 1083 n409
5:22 625 n821, 906 n1063, 935 n1211
5:23 1029 n44
5:25 625 n820, 983 n1494
5:25–33 859 n774
5:26 393 n953
5:28 625 n822
5:29 625 n820
5:30 405 n1040, 408 n1057, 775 n271
5:31–2 987 n1528
5:32 1091 n468
6:1 593 n644, 668 n1052
6:1–9 859 n774

6:4 625 n823, 1017 n1759
6:5 418 n1161, 626 n828, 906 n1062, 935 n1211
6:6–7 626 n830
6:9 626 n829, 881 n909
6:11–17 266 n118, 343 n661
6:11–18 594 n646
6:12 901 n1038, 1054 n199
6:14 317 n497, 364 n755, 364 n758
6:14–17 364 n754
6:14–20 364 n754
6:16 364 n756
6:17 364 n757
6:18 940 n1241
6:19–20 337 n622

Philippians

1:5 393 n952
1:8 315 n480
1:12–15 421 n1184
1:15–18 899 n1027
1:21 702 n1222
2:3 285 n264
2:5–11 956 n1322
2:6–11 280 n230
2:7 798 n406, 991 n1583
2:8 272 n157, 298 n346, 906 n1060, 987 n1532, 1076 n347
2:15–16 619 n785
2:21 996 n1621
3:2 416 n1149
3:3–7 404 n1033
3:7 697 n1195
3:8 776 n277
3:12–14 286 n269
3:13–14 407 n1051
3:19 696 n1188, 788 n348, 1070 n278, 1071 n291
3:20 410 n1075
4:1 315 n471
4:3 315 n483
4:7 599 n664
4:9 1072 n300
4:13 298 n349, 375 n832, 526 n317, 704 n1238

Colossians

1:2 903 n1047
1:4 393 n952, 903 n1047
1:5 691 n1158
1:13 393 n954
1:14 320 n523, 923 n1151
1:15 253 n14, 255 n35, 257 n53, 975 n1436, 975 n1439, 1026 n21, 1067 n244, 1076 n336
1:15–20 280 n230, 956 n1322
1:16 57 n146, 376 n838, 1067 n244, 1089 n456
1:18 920 n1121, 1029 n44, 1099 n533
1:20 412 n1103
1:23 833 n601
1:24 276 n188, 707 n1252
1:25 279 n189
1:27–8 956 n1322
2:3 371 n814
2:8–15 1029 n39
2:11–15 1096 n513
2:12 399 n1003
2:14 1101 n553
2:16–17 421 n1188
2:18 322 n543
2:19 1099 n534
2:20 399 n1003, 982 n1488
3:1–2 410 n1075
3:5 775 n266, 775 n271, 901 n1039, 908 n1072, 954 n1307, 1049 n173
3:9 679 n1110
3:9–10 416 n1147
3:11 619 n782
3:12 405 n1042, 1071 n287
3:15 533 n356
3:16 501 n169, 531 n350
3:18 413 n1121, 935 n1211
3:18–21 906 n1063
3:18–23 246 n18
3:19 413 n1120
3:20 593 n644, 625 n825, 668 n1052
3:21 625 n823
3:22 418 n1161, 626 n830, 906 n1062, 935 n1211
3:25 881 n909
4:1 626 n828
4:2–3 322 n539
4:9 279 n224, 563 n494

4:17 399 n1006

1 Thessalonians

2:1–5 1013 n1741
2:5–7 266 n119
2:5–10 433 n1255
2:7 315 n479
2:7–8 279 n212
2:9 335 n612
2:10 1013 n1742
2:19 336 n775, 363 n749, 573 n547
3:4 362 n746
3:7 362 n746
4:1 570 n533
4:9 157 n379, 263 n95, 904 n1050
4:12 421 n1192
4:13–17 958 n1335
4:16 1089 n456
5:5 339 n644
5:5–8 317 n498
5:6 318 n500
5:7 297 n336
5:8 317 n499, 364 n755, 1054 n201
5:14 1093 n480
5:17 322 n539, 833 n599, 940 n1241
5:22 120 n191, 270 n139, 273 n170
5:23 1072 n300, 1077 n359

2 Thessalonians

2:7 914 n1086
3:1–2 371 n810
3:8 335 n612, 337 n627
3:10–11 321 n531

1 Timothy

1:3 418 n1162
1:5 393 n945
1:8–11 1033 n68
1:9 224 n763
1:17 418 n1167, 1067 n244, 1068 n256
2:2 418 n1159
2:5 1077 n353, 1102 n557
2:8 418 n1162
2:15 622 n810, 928 n1176
3:1 338 n632, 338 n635, 351 n693
3:1–4 303 n384
3:1–5 303 n385
3:1–7 307 n408
3:1–10 272 n166
3:2 263 n95, 273 n168, 339 n641, 676 n1098
3:2–3 413 n1125
3:2–7 338 n634
3:3 278 n202
3:4–5 622 n811
3:5 667 n1047
3:6 322 n543
3:7 270 n141, 322 n544, 602 n683
3:9 393 n945, 418 n1162
3:15 626 n833
3:16 546 n405
4:1 1021 n1778
4:2 769 n219
4:4 668 n1055
4:7 620 n798
4:7–8 120, 121 n192
4:8 285 n259, 286 n268
4:12 427 n1212, 621 n801
5:1–16 621 n802
5:3 427 n1214
5:6 393 n949
5:8 912 n1079
5:10 995 n1615
5:11–13 1063 n220
5:11–16 347 n675
5:13 321 n531
5:14 925 n1163
5:14–16 347 n675
5:17 432 n1244
5:17–18 778 n291
5:17–26 890 n951
5:18 335 n613, 369 n796, 703 n1228, 703 n1230
5:21 571 n536, 718 n1295, 956 n1322
6:2 567 n513, 817 n477
6:4 86 n37
6:8 335 n611
6:9 322 n544
6:10 273 n167, 303 n382, 746 n87
6:12 336 n616

6:13 718 n1296
6:17–19 624 n817
6:18 322 n540, 995 n1615

2 Timothy
1:3 393 n945
1:14 803 n432
2 529 n342
2:3–4 269 n137
2:4 778 n290
2:14–19 899 n1026
2:15 614 n755, 899 n1023
2:17–18 926 n1166, 958 n1332
2:19 893 n986
2:20 208, 926 n1164
2:21 926 n1165
2:22 621 n801
2:24 339 n641, 676 n1098
3:4 322 n543
3:11 957 n1328
3:15 298 n341, 1093 n488
3:16 179 n494, 185 n533, 216, 220 n734, 302 n372, 332 n591, 349 n682, 350 n687, 382 n858, 386 n881, 402 nn1027–8, 497 n151, 500 n164, 545 n404, 547 n408, 571 n537, 574 n554, 574 n556, 575 n558, 579 n574, 629 n841, 637 n886, 639 n899, 642 n915, 743 n76, 769 n219, 792 n368, 817 n477, 890 n951
3:16–17 112, 114, 127, 172, 173 n463, 179, 299 n352
3:17 575 n559
4:1–2 175, 497 n151, 571 n535
4:1–4 899 n1026
4:2 96 n85, 112, 114, 127, 173, 173 n463, 179, 233, 350 n687, 386 n881, 402 n1027, 410 n1076, 574 n554, 574 nn556–7, 639 n899, 642 n915, 743 n76, 817 n477, 890 n951, 1093 n480
4:7 902 n1044
4:7–8 400 n1010
4:8 573 n547
4:13 321 n529

Titus
1:2 391 n922
1:6–7 272 n164
1:6–9 272 n166
1:7 270 n139, 276 n191, 278 n202, 375 n830, 898 n1020
1:7–8 277 n196
1:7–9 307 n408, 413 n1125, 561 n485
1:9 567 n513, 817 n477, 890 n951
1:13 1093 n480
2:2 620 n795
2:3 620 n796
2:4–5 621 n799
2:5 906 n1063
2:6 621 n800
2:7 800 n415
2:15 1093 n480
3:1 322 n540, 413 n1123
3:5 618 n779, 902 n1045
3:7 391 n922
3:8 322 n540
3:14 322 n540

Philemon
Philemon 279 n224, 563 n494
2 399 n1006
9 571 n534, 621 n803
20 718 n1297

Hebrews
1:1 256 n43
1:2 1082 n395
1:3 257 n53, 1069 n261, 1076 n337
1:28 1083 n404
2:2 1030 n45
2:7 1070 n270
2:14–15 992 n1586
4:15 272 n162, 333 n603
5:6 1076 n345
5:6–10 310 n431
5:10 1076 n345
5:12 620 n793
5:12–13 1096 n515

6:7 431 n1241
6:20 1076 n345
7 310 n431
7:1 1076 n345
7:3 1076 nn345–6
7:10 1076 n345
7:25 1077 n353
8:1–7 1101 n555
8:5 421 n1188
8:6 1077 n353
9:14 333 n603, 393 n945
9:15 336 n620, 904 n1051, 1077 n353
9:24 388 n893
9:27 363 n748
10:1 421 n1188, 683 n1126, 691 n1158
10:2 393 n945
10:22 393 n945
11:1 655 nn981–2, 1042 n138, 1044 n150
11:5 958 n1337
11:27 1067 n244
12:9 668 n1051
12:22 145 n314, 1027 n28
13:1 904 n1050
13:2 626 n832
13:8 410 n1085
13:17 151 n345, 345 n668, 386 n876, 413 n1123
13:20 1072 n300

James

1:5 535 n375
1:6 884 n930
1:9–10 625 n819
1:17 323 n550
1:25 322 n540
1:26–7 905 n1054
2 995 n1615
2:1–5 421 n1186
2:5 569 n529
2:8 803 n436
2:14 322 n542
2:17 1021 n1778
2:19 1021 n1778
3:15 1059 n217
3:17 309 n425
4:6 25 n31, 26 n36
5:16 34 n66

1 Peter

1:2 906 n1059
1:5 1093 n488
1:9 1093 n488
1:19 823 n518, 1038 n114, 1076 n345
1:20 1033 n69
1:23 557 n465
1:25 408 n1061
2:2 1096 n515
2:5 619 n788
2:7–8 1101 n552
2:9–10 996 n1624
2:13–14 376 n836, 413 n1123
2:22 333 n603
3:1 413 n1121
3:3–5 578 n569
3:6 503 n184
3:16 803 n430
3:20 828 n558
3:20–1 399 n1002, 924 n1157, 959 n1346
3:21 393 n945
4:7 317 n496, 512 n229
4:8 300 n362
4:10 277 n197, 375 n830
4:11 277 n198
4:14 394 n960
5:1–2 620 n794
5:2 277 n195, 314 n465
5:2–4 151 n345, 345 n668
5:4 336 n775, 363 n749
5:5 25 n31, 26 n36, 405 n1042
5:8 317 n496

2 Peter

1:17 990 n1559
1:19 322 n537
2:15–16 270 n142
2:22 419 n1175
3:13 145 n314, 255 n39

1 John

1:1 1083 n407
1:1–2 256 n44
1:7 923 n1151
1:8 983 n1492
2:1 1102 n556

2:6 834 n602
2:12–14 621 nn804–5
2:13 621 n806, 859 n776
2:20 292 n306, 293 n312
3:2 1081 n391
3:9 317 n494
4:1 372 n818, 958 n1336
4:3 958 n1336
4:6 1077 n360
4:12 1067 n247
4:16 535 n372
4:18 74 n202
5:6 775 n265
5:6–8 679 n1108
5:18 317 n494, 983 n1493
5:19 901 n1037

Jude
9 841 n654, 1089 n456, 1090 n457
11 270 n142

Revelation
1:4 1065 n232
1:8 1065 n232
2:14 270 n142
2:23 261 n80, 884 n928
2:27 713 n1282
3:1 393 n949
3:20 323 n552
4:8 1065 n232
5:5 1074 n323
5:6 1076 n345
9:7–9 428 n1222
11:17 1065 n232
12:7 1090 n457
14:7 1072 n296
17:8 315 n483
19 619 n788
19:10 1089 n453
20:1–6 940 n1243
21 145 n314, 409 n1064, 1036 n101
21:1–22:5 1027 n28
22:1 317 n492
22:3 317 n492
22:5 394 n961
22:9 1089 n453
22:11 308 n417
22:18–19 334 n607
22:19 315 n483, 915 n1096

This page intentionally left blank

General Index

Aaron 301–2; vestments 309–14, 372
Abelard, Peter 5
ability (proofs) 641–2
Abraham 29, 201, 274, 294, 499, 503, 529, 558, 618, 632, 695, 708, 711, 808, 829, 854, 929, 934–9, 955, 960, 981, 1005, 1008, 1039, 1042, 1044, 1066, 1068, 1072, 1094–6, 1102
absolution 2–3, 5. *See also* confession; forgiveness; penance; restitution
accommodation (rhetorical device) 137–8, 278 n207, 281 n236, 333–4, 394–6, 421, 629–33
accumulation 788–9
adage (figure of speech) 864–71. *See also* maxims; *sententia* (figure of speech)
admonition 624–6
adnominatio (figure of speech) 848–50
Adrian VI (pope) 2
aetiology 582 n593
Agabus, prophet 396–7
allegory 192 n574, 216–17, 477–9, 876, 889, 917–32; advice to preacher on use of 964–5, 970–2; choosing sources for 967–8; false 949–52; forms of 930–2, 966–7; interpretation of 958–62; need for 954–6; in oration 191–2; proving dogma 963–4; and Scripture 918–19, 920–4, 938–9, 961–3, 968–9; used by Ambrose 944–7; used by church Fathers 214–15; used by Jerome 924–9. *See also* anagogy; metaphor
almsgiving: as payment at confession 42–3; as penalty 68; to the poor 432; to support preachers 427–8, 429–31
Ambrose, St (of Milan) 289, 377–9, 493; on soul showing in outward appearance 466 n1; use of allegory by 944–7; *De officiis* 466 n1; *De virginitate* 466 n1
Ambrose, St (of Milan), works attributed to, *De vocatione omnium gentium* 996
amplification 550–1, 610, 773–5, 785–7, 789–90
anagogy 204–5, 933–4, 939, 968. *See also* allegory; metaphor
angels 175, 1088–90
Anthropomorphites 214, 940
antitheses, structural 262 n90
aphorisms 770–1
'apostate,' interpretations of word 909–10
apostles 261–2, 264, 321
Apostles' Creed 58, 111, 219, 220, 292, 543, 676, 683
apostrophe (figure of speech) 842–3
apothecaries, practices of 65–6
appearances, outward 420–1
Aramaic 485
argumentation (in rhetoric) 339 n645, 504, 545, 588–9, 664, 676, 685–8, 702, 704, 717–18, 821, 879
arguments. *See* proofs
Arians 415 n1133, 606–7, 634, 693, 1078 n370
Aristotle, Aristotelian: on logic 472, 612; on oratory types 497 n151; *De interpretatione* 472 n27; *Nichomachaean Ethics* 1041 n137; *Organon* 472 n26; *Rhetoric* 500 n164

arrangement 509, 725–7; dictated by topic 728–35; of proofs 727–8
artes praedicandi 105–9, 112, 118 n175, 219, 730 nn30–1
articles of faith 220–1
articuli (figure of speech) 819–20
'arts of preaching.' *See artes praedicandi*
assertion 717–19
Athanasius, St (of Alexandria) 491, 607
attrition 33, 34–5, 47 n105
Augsburg Confession (1530) 12
Augustine, St (Aurelius Augustinus) 289 n285, 328–9, 494; on daily prayer as confession 51 n123; as exemplary preacher 127; health 356; on interpretation of Scripture 972; perfected by the Holy Spirit 325; use of figures of speech 850–1, 852–4
– *Ad Honoratum* 999
– *Ad Simplicianum* 895
– *Confessions* 276 n192, 723 n1320
– *Contra adversarium Legis et Prophetarum* 835–6
– *De civitate Dei* 829
– *De doctrina christiana* (*On Christian Teaching*) 78, 106 n129, 109–10, 168–70, 217, 500 n165, 512 n234, 850 n715, 896, 962, 965 n1386, 999
– *De mendacio* 21 n15
– *De symbolo ad catechumenos* 28 n45
– *De Trinitate* 367 n783, 706 n1250
– *De utilitate credendi* 217–18, 999 n1645
– *Sermon 164, Sermons* 122 n198
– works attributed to: sermons 748–52, 754–5; *De vera at falsa poenitentia* 47 n108, 49
auricular confession 2–3, 4 n15, 5–6
austere life 286–9
authority figures 59–60
authority in preachers 420, 422–34

Baechem, Nicolaas 6
Balaam, prophet 270, 388
baptism, sacrament of 35, 400–1, 678–80, 902–4
Basil, St (of Caesarea) 127, 193, 287, 356, 379–80, 490
Beaufort, Margaret 244
Becker, Jan 86–7, 150
Béda, Noël 9
Béné, Charles 80, 110
Benedict, St 163, 196, 504 and n193, 623, 628, 753, 901, 905, 909–10
beneficial category (deliberative speaking) 548–51
Bernard, St (of Clairvaux) 107–8, 196, 494 n133, 504, 562, 628, 817–18
beseeching 570–1
biblical characters, assumed natures 985–7
biblical *genera* 112, 114, 172–3, 497 n151, 500–1. *See also genera dicendi* (kinds of speaking)
bishops: as administrators of sacraments 142–3; appointing and training preachers 44, 140–1, 149–51, 339–40, 344–8, 351–2; contemporary, faults of 356–7; delegation by 341 n651, 403–4; duties of 126, 349–52, 370, 400–3; empowering clergy in confession 48; functions of 148–9, 328–9; from monastic life 288–9; plurality of benefices 330–1, 350; political role of 343, 349–52; position in society 252; powers of censorship 99; sermons 126–7; as steward for God 276–7; stipends of 403–4; teaching by 126–7, 140–2, 142–3, 145–6
bishop's collegium 344, 352; Erasmus' vision of 152–7
bodily exercises 285–7
body and mind (proofs) 643–4
Bonaventure, St 18 n2, 862
Botzheim, Johann von 87
breastfeeding 541–2, 1096 n517
Briart, Jan 4, 6
Brigittines 367 n785
'brothers,' interpretations of word 904
Butrica, James, on *Ecclesiastes* 93

Caiaphas 389, 998
Cain 30, 618, 683, 760, 787, 929, 1092
Calvin, John 12
canon law 29 n49, 40 n83, 482 n77
Caracciolo, Roberto (of Lecce) 197 and n602, 496, 804–6, 812–13
Carthusians 367 n785
catachresis (figure of speech) 876
Celsus, Aulus Cornelius 67
censures 47 n108, 48

charity: obligations of 61, 1051–2; practice of 12, 28, 66, 356, 370, 434–5; true nature of 56–7; as a virtue 1045–6; as yardstick for life 55–6
Charles v (Holy Roman emperor) 10
Chiliasts 940
Chomarat, Jacques 158, 239
Christ: as bishop exemplar 131–2; and church (mystical body) 993–4; clothed in Holy Spirit 310; comparison to John the Baptist 289–91; divinity of 878–9, 887–9, 987–93; earthly ministry of 117, 132; as exemplary preacher 117, 127–8, 177–8, 254–6, 271–2, 275, 305–6, 307–8, 333; as healer 20 n13, 881–2; as highest *ecclesiastes* 254; as highest Prince 251; humanity of 987–93; lifestyle and training of 289–90; as 'master of the games' 365–6; as Messiah to all 414–15; perfection of 271; predicated in Old Law 398–9, 1038–9; as prophet 398; as Redeemer 254 n25; restoration of mankind by 231, 259; spirit of 258–9, 269; as teacher 280, 328 n574, 883; as Word 117, 126–7, 253. *See also* God; Holy Spirit; Trinity
Christian society: exemplary members of 707–9; fall of 357–61; growth through exploration 360–1; hierarchical order of 160, 246; as republic 251–2
Chrysostom. *See* John Chrysostom, St
church: as Christ's mystical body 993–4; hierarchical order of 141–2, 148, 346–7, 384–5, 1023, 1027; and state 328
churches: dedication of 700; music in 700–1
Cicero: *De finibus* 561 n483; *De natura deorum* 257 n54, 259 n61; *De officiis* 466 n1, 471 n21; *De oratore* 117 n173, 500 n164, 725 n1; *De partitione oratoria* 510 n220; *De senectute* 257 n51; *Philippics* 596–8; *Pro Milone* 844; *Pro Murena* 839
circuitio (figure of speech) 858–9
Circumcellions 941 n1248
civil law 29 n49
classical authors: influence on Erasmus 109–10; as orators 192–3; to study 489–90
Clavasio, Angelus de, *Summa angelica* 4
Clement vii (pope) 10
clergy 44–5, 47–8, 369–70. *See also* priests
clothing 767–8
coinage 65
Colet, John 99, 146, 297 n340
Collège de Montaigu 153
commandments 34, 56–7. *See also* Decalogue; Law; Old Law
commonplaces (*loci communes*) 189–90, 226 n776, 645–7, 768–9, 771–3
communicatio (figure of speech) 826, 856
commutatio (figure of speech) 858
comparison 777–83, 799–801
complexio (figure of speech) 816–17
concio 113, 121, 122 n199, 123 n 202, 249 n2
concionator 113, 121, 122
conciones 122–3
conclusion 721–4
concord 232 n806, 1098–104; of four persons 1028; in sermons 230–1; through obedience 907
condition 628–33
conduplicatio (figure of speech) 823–4
confession 22–4, 43, 49, 51–3, 58–9, 1092; manuals of 8–9; method of 72; methods of 5, 28–9; in New Testament 2; utility of 19. *See also* absolution; penance; restitution
confession, sacrament of 1018, 1020; advantages of 7, 11, 23–36; breaking the seal of 39–40; confessors in 41–2, 45–7; corruption of innocence through 37–8; disadvantages of 7, 37–43; divine origin of 11, 13–14; encouraging immodesty in 42; Erasmus' personal participation in 20; leading to self-knowledge 34; and the Lutherans 12; necessity of 10; object of 2; as obligatory 36 n70; origins of 4–5, 7, 10, 18–19, 19–22, 41–2; penitents in 45–7; preparation for 50; private 2–3, 50; public 2; reform of 14, 43; repetition of sins in

32–3; restoration to God through 35–6; as second baptism 45; utility of 27
confessors 7, 10; behaviour of 24; burden on 19; characteristics needed in 43–4; criticisms of 8–9, 12; cupidity of 43; dangers to 40–1; as healers 14; human frailty of 37; as judges 14, 33; perpetuating sin 39; prayers of 34; role in sacrament of confession 20, 41–2, 43–5, 71; station in life of 25; susceptible to sin 21; traps laid by bad 6; as tyrants 38–9. *See also* penitents
confirmation, in oration 185–7
conformatio (figure of speech) 840–2
congratulation 570
congregations: duty of to prayer 370–2; duty of to respect preacher 384–5, 439–43; faults of 438–40; nature of 123–4, 382–3, 384; pursuit of godliness 158–9, 161–2; willingness of to be taught 341–2, 438–42
consecration 302–5
consequentia (figure of speech) 863–4
consolation through oratory 180, 571–4
Contarini, Gasparo 100–1
contemporary authors, as orators 196–8
contentio (figure of speech) 839–40, 855
continuatio (figure of speech) 855
contio. *See concio*
contraries 669–70, 678, 691–4, 709–10
contrarium (figure of speech) 855
contrition 9, 33, 35, 47 n105
contritionist tradition 5
conversio (figure of speech) 816–17
corporal punishment 350 n686, 395, 1052 n187
correctio (figure of speech) 822–3
cosmic hierarchies (Dionysian) 221–2, 1022–4
creation, God's orderly 129 n237, 161, 221–3
culmination 698–9, 728–9
Cyprian, St (Caecilius Cyprianus) 67, 289 n286, 325, 491 n126

David 260–1, 263
David of Burgundy 344 n665, 345–6
David v, king of Ethiopia 359 n726
Decalogue 220, 1030–1. *See also* commandments; Law; Old Law
decorum 138, 278 n207, 1014–21
dedication 293 n318, 294
definitio (figure of speech) 857–8
definition, in oratory 648–53; by contraries 678, 691–4; by description 694–5; by difference and property 658–9; by division and partition 660–2, 678, 685, 701–2; by etymology 659–60, 695–7; use of in preaching 676–7
deity, invoked in sermons 533–5
deliberative (suasorial) speaking 171–2, 174–5, 546–52. *See also* epideictic (encomiastic) speaking; *genera dicendi* (kinds of speaking); judicial (forensic) speaking
delighting through oratory 168–70
delivery in oration 189, 509–10, 738–9; accommodation in appearance 768; through expression 757–66; by voice 739–47, 755–7
demonstratio (figure of speech) 843–5
demonstrative speaking. *See* epideictic (encomiastic) speaking
Demosthenes 156, 189, 193, 489, 506, 509, 510, 518, 586, 597, 728 n18, 737–40, 1002
denominatio (figure of speech) 827–8
design, in oration 1002–11
dialectic 154–5, 186–7, 468–9
diminutio (figure of speech) 838
Diogenes Laertius 270–1
Dionysius. *See* Psuedo-Dionysius the Areopagite
discernment 424–6
discretion 281–2, 295–6
disiunctio (figure of speech) 826
dispensations 48
dissimilitudes 667–73
distinctio 755–7
distributio (figure of speech) 859–60
divine law 1030–1; at centre of cosmic hierarchy 223–4; in Christ's preaching 129; communication of 129; importance of 129–31; and law of nature 130; and Old Law 224–5; teaching of 319–20

divisions in oration 184–5, 187, 537–8, 585–9, 593–8; aids to 590–2; difficulties in 543–5; excessive use of 540–3; warning against use of 538–40. *See also* proofs; propositions
doctrine, false 413, 415–16
Dominicans 5, 10, 361 n737
Donatists 941–2, 993
doubling (rhetorical device) 296 n331
doxologies 553
dubitatio (figure of speech) 825–6
Du Moulin, François 16

ecclesia: Erasmus' use of term 121 n196; meaning of 249 n3
ecclesiastes 121, 122, 251–2 and passim
ecclesiastical duties 376–7, 385, 400–3
ecclesiastical hierarchy 141–2, 148, 346–7, 384–5, 1023, 1027
ecclesiastical rhetoric 112, 172–81
education 296–7, 346–8, 400; 'art' in oratory 468–73; faults in system 622–4; form of 151–2, 326 n566, 472–3, 480–3, 487–8; importance of 103–5, 340–1; in monasteries 622–4. *See also* seminaries
effictio (figure of speech) 877
emoting through oratory 168–70
emotions 518–19, 721–4; in classical oratory 790–1; gentle and powerful 792–4; in preachers 161–2, 804–6; in preaching 169–79, 795–9; response to Gospel 409–11; of the Spirit 807; stirred by preaching 161–2, 189–92, 799–804, 807–9, 812–14; Stoics on 1053 n194; touched through exhortation 567; transitory 806
encomia 501–4
encomiastic speaking. *See* epideictic (encomiastic) speaking
enthymeme 431, 472, 499, 716, 867
epideictic (encomiastic) speaking 171–2, 175–9, 501–4, 553–67. *See also* deliberative (suasorial) speaking; *genera dicendi* (kinds of speaking); judicial (forensic) speaking
epilogue 720–1
epiphonema (figure of speech) 867–9
epitheta (figure of speech) 845–7
Erasmus: on canonical books of Bible 132 n 253; on Christological origins of confession 22; on concord throughout creation 230–2, 1098–104; and confession 10–1, 16, 20; controversies with Catholic theologians 89; death of 237; debate with Nicolaas Baechem 6; doctrinal teaching of 220; early life of 38; on ecclesiology 141–2, 220, 594 n647, 729 n22; on friendship 244–5; health of 16, 220, 243, 247, 363, 364; and heresy 228 n782, 236, 1048; influences on in preaching 84–6, 115; interpretation of the Law 224–6; on loss 245; and Luther 20 n12, 25–7, 47 n105, 88; as pastor 354; on Pauline model of church 143–5; as preacher 115–16; and the Reformation 233–6, 236–7, 342–4; regrets at passing glory 81–2; relationship with John Fisher 84 n31, 85–6; relations with Lee 4 n14; return to Basel 78; on Scotist theology 126 n219; on St Augustine 149; submitting to discipline 9; use of rhetoric by 134–6, 258 n58; writing catechism 219–20
Erasmus, original works:
– *Adagia* (I i) 16 n4, 282 n245, 470 n18, 483 n80, 547 n411, 629 n840, 705 n1240, 727 n13, 773 n257, 802 n428, 865 nn804–7; (I ii) 27 n41, 577 n568, 616 n764, 738 n56, 771 n232, 802 n424, 1101 nn547–8, 1103 n569; (I iii) 44 n100, 506 n210, 718 n1294, 823 n521; (I iv) 275 n177, 503 n187, 615 n758, 865 n808, 1101 n549; (I v) 264 n106, 479 n57, 735 n45, 772 n249, 821 n503; (I vi) 34 n64, 772 n247, 772 nn242–4, 950 n1289; (I vii) 715 n1287, 763 n184, 771 n238, 796 n390, 1102 n566; (I viii) 42 n91, 757 n141, 770 n230, 949 n1283; (I ix) 479 n59, 528 n334, 671 n1070, 771 n237, 781 n298; (I x) 576 n565, 616 n764, 712 n1274, 733 n41, 771 n241, 827 n553; (II i) 120 n187, 550 n420, 770 nn226–7, 771 n239, 962 n1372; (II ii) 479 n56; (II iii) 567 n516, 615 n763, 771 n236, 845 n684; (II iv) 522 n295; (II v) 19 n7; (II vi) 772 n250; (II viii) 760 n163,

796 n393; (II ix) 19 n7, 39 n81, 768 n212, 893 n898, 1101 n550; (III i) 865 n805, 1104 n577; (III ii) 484 n86; (III iii) 651 n951; (III v) 761 n169; (III vi) 1024 n9; (III vii) 941 n1247; (IV i) 786 n330, 823 n521; (IV ii) 19 n7; (IV iii) 776 nn274–275; (IV iv) 629 n842; (IV v) 273 n169, 839 n640; (IV ix) 898 n1019, 949 n1286; (IV x) 479 n58; (V i) 482 n75; (V ii) 469 n11, 477 n45
– *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum*: Romans 323 n551; Corinthians 133 n259, 322 n536, 388 n894, 442 n1290
– *Apologia* 2
– *Apologia ad Stunicae conclusiones* 20 n12, 22 n17
– *Apologia adversus monachos* 6 n20, 10 n38, 18 n4, 22 n17, 37 n75, 42 n92
– *Apologia adversus Petrum Sutorem* 89 n54
– *Apologia adversus Stunicae Blasphemiae* 18 n3
– *Apologia contra Latomi dialogum* 102, 115 n165, 136, 137 n 277, 152 n355, 155 n369, 161 n400
– *Apologia de 'In principio erat sermo'* 253 n16
– *Apologiae aliquot in Nathalem Beddam* 35 n68
– *Colloquia* 6, 13, 126 n219
– *Confabulatio pia* 37 n75, 50 n122
– correspondence: (Ep 61) 697 n1200; (Ep 121) 697 1200; (Ep 138) 729 n22; (Ep 142) 1048 n170; (Ep 182) 136 n271; (Ep 205) 426 n1207; (Ep 229) 84 n31; (Ep 263) 81 n17; (Ep 289) 656 n985; (Ep 337) 973 n1423; (Ep 384) 126 n217; (Ep 457) 84 n31; (Ep 517) 748 n97; (Ep 518) 748 n97; (Ep 519) 748 n97; (Ep 541) 81 n17, 115 n164; (Ep 586) 728 n20; (Ep 814) 1070 n270; (Ep 844) 211 n679; (Ep 858) 120 n190, 124 n205, 126 n216, 127 n220, 128 n228, 146 n318, 149 n336, 160 n396, 163 n414, 226 n777, 253 n16; (Ep 899) 753 n121; (Ep 901) 748 n96; (Ep 916) 358 n718; (Ep 932) 86 nn39–40; (Ep 952) 150 n343; (Ep 967) 484 n87; (Ep 967A) 87 n43, 142 n301; (Ep 1113) 115 n165; (Ep 1125) 103 n116; (Ep 1153) 6 n21; (Ep 1162) 6 n21; (Ep 1164) 6 n19, 6 n21; (Ep 1172) 6 n21; (Ep 1183) 146 n326; (Ep 1202) 6 n20; (Ep 1208) 732 n38; (Ep 1211) 99 n101, 116, 117 n173, 119 n184, 146 n318, 167 n435, 177 n484, 184 n525, 188 nn553–6, 189 n559; (Ep 1225) 6 nn18–19; (Ep 1231) 100 n104; (Ep 1232) 837 nn625–6; (Ep 1236) 88 n51; (Ep 1310) 2 n1; (Ep 1311) 84 n30; (Ep 1321) 87 n42; (Ep 1323) 85 n35; (Ep 1324) 2 n1; (Ep 1329) 2 n1; (Ep 1332) 84, 87 n45; (Ep 1334) 233 n816, 236 n828, 292 n305, 493 n124, 1078 n371; (Ep 1338) 2 n1; (Ep 1341A) 84 n32, 87, 90 n56; (Ep 1347) 2, 865 n812; (Ep 1369) 681 n1118; (Ep 1376) 16 n5; (Ep 1397) 2 n1; (Ep 1400) 426 n1208; (Ep 1408) 16 n6; (Ep 1410) 4 n12; (Ep 1489) 84–5, 87 n46, 89 n54, 219 n729; (Ep 1523) 9 n32; (Ep 1558) 349 n683, 350 n688, 363 n751; (Ep 1563) 491 n118; (Ep 1571) 10 n36; (Ep 1579) 9 n34; (Ep 1581) 9 n34, 10 n36, 89 n54, 154 n364; (Ep 1582) 9 n32, 10 n36; (Ep 1585) 10 n36; (Ep 1600) 10 n36; (Ep 1738) 837 nn625–6; (Ep 1744) 88 n48, 103 n116, 149 n329, 233 n816; (Ep 1787) 89 n54; (Ep 1790) 142 n302, 491 n116; (Ep 1800) 358 n720, 491 n118; (Ep 1801) 491 n118; (Ep 1804) 89 n54; (Ep 1921) 89 n54; (Ep 2033) 90 n56; (Ep 2037) 133 n255; (Ep 2087) 1035 n89; (Ep 2136) 96 n84, 1035 n89; (Ep 2157) 86 n37, 127 n224, 149 n332, 490 n114, 748 n96, 837 n627; (Ep 2205) 701 n1213; (Ep 2225) 89 n54; (Ep 2285) 701 n1213; (Ep 2355) 363 n750; (Ep 2359) 79 n8, 491 n118; (Ep 2432) 472 n26; (Ep 2508) 89 n55; (Ep 2611) 263 n95, 379 n846, 490 n115; (Ep 2700) 361 n737; (Ep 2956) 10 n36; (Ep 2961) 90 n59; (Ep 3016) 91 nn60–1; (Ep 3028) 78 n1; (Ep 3032) 425 n1205; (Ep 3035) 91 n63; (Ep 3036) 79, 84, 92 n68, 242–6; (Ep 3048) 91 n62, 92 n69; (Ep 3049) 91 n60, 91 n64, 92 n69; (Ep 3063) 91 n64; (Ep 3069) 91 n64; (Ep 3073) 93 n71; (Ep 3076) 91 nn64–5; (Ep 3081)

78 n3; (Ep 3086) 78 n3; (Ep 3130) 237 n833;
– *De concordia* 22 n19, 118 n178, 365 n770, 512 n234
– *De conscribendis epistolis* 567 n514, 571 n537
– *De copia* 101, 264 n106, 373 n826, 474 n32, 593 n645, 839, 843, 877, 1041 n136
– *De esu carnium* 10 n35, 13, 59 n157, 126 n217
– *De immensa Dei misericordia* 107 n132
– *De libero arbitrio* 88, 323 n551, 405 n1044
– *De praeparatione ad mortem* 13, 28 n44, 53 n133
– *De pueris instituendis* 88 n51, 151 n346, 373 n826
– *De puritate tabernaculi* 78 n3, 160 n393, 272 n163
– *De ratione studii* 101, 480 n64, 493 n127
– *De recta pronuntiatione* 101, 103 n120, 167 n433, 473 n28
– *Ecclesiastes*: challenges in translation of 239–41; comment on 80, 81, 93, 94; compared to Augustine's *On Christian Teaching* 78, 237; compared to Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* 232; completion of 90–1; dedication of 92–3; editions used by translators of 239–40; impact of 78, 83, 94–5; in *Index librorum prohibitorum* 93; publication and editions of 91–2, 237; revisions of 93–4; title variations of 249 n1; as a tour de force 134–5; writing of 82–7, 88–90, 109–10, 242–3
– *Enchiridion* 120 n190, 121 n192, 128 n230, 143 n306, 206 n654, 253 n16, 349 n683, 364 n759, 643, 697 n1200, 938 n1228, 1092 n473
– *Exomologesis* 2, 7, 11–2, 14–15
– *Explanatio symboli* 219–20, 292 n305, 992 n1596, 1026 n20, 1056 n210
– *Funus* 44 n97, 53 n133, 63 n166
– *Hyperaspistes* 118, 130, 323 n551
– *Institutio christiani matrimonii* 2 n4, 29 n49, 48 n111, 401 n1017
– *Institutio principis christiani* 65, 689 n1152
– *Julius exclusus* 34 n67, 426 n1207
– *Lingua* 88, 546 n405
– *Manifesta mendacia* 4 n12, 10, 18 n3, 20 n12, 22 n17, 32 n60, 35 n69, 37 n75, 38 n78, 41 n86, 42 n92, 46 n103, 49 n116, 51 n124
– *Militaria* 63 n166
– *Moria* 13, 40 n82, 111, 120 n189, 127 n220, 282 n247, 349 n683, 370 n800, 545 n401, 790 n357
– *Novum Testamentum* 134
– *Parabolae* 470 n19
– *Paraclesis* 81 n18, 128, 134, 155 n372
– *Paraphrasis in Novum Testamentum*: Mark 426 n1206, 429 n1226; Luke 143 n303, 170 n447, 405 n1044; John 128 n230, 138 n 279, 253 n16, 255 n35, 882 n917; Acts 118 n178; Romans 323 n551, 1049 n178, 1090 n459; Galatians 315 n474, 315 n478, 743n76; Timothy 263 n95, 273 n168, 347 n675
– *Peregrinatio religionis ergo* 68 n184
– *In psalmum 2* 26 n37
– *In psalmum 3* 2
– *In psalmum 4* 560 n480
– *In psalmum 38* 96 n84, 116 n169, 120 n187, 232 n807, 425 n1205
– *Ratio* 79 n9, 86 n39, 99 n100, 102 n115, 111 n146, 115 n163, 116 n168, 125 n212, 126 n219, 129 n239, 130 n243, 140 n291, 155, 199, 232 nn811–12, 962 n1373
– *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* 4–5, 8 n27, 19 n9, 20 n11, 22 n17, 36 n70, 37 n75, 41 n86, 43 n94, 44 n99, 49 n114, 52 n128
– *Responsio ad epistolam Alberti Pii* 10 n37
– *Spongia* 6 n21
– *Vita Hieronymi* 115 n164–65
Escobar, Andreas de 8
ethos 103, 518 n275
etymology 653–4, 659–60, 695–7
Eucharist 232 n810, 319, 391, 897 n1014
Euchites 940
Eunomians 415 n1134
exclamation (figure of speech) 817–18
excommunication 5
exhortation 567–71, 890

exomologesis, meaning of 8
exordia 182–3, 510–11, 698–9, 728–9; examples of used by ancients 522–3; as placation 515; and Scripture 511–15, 527–31; suitable to theme 526–7, 531–3; as transition 525–6; use of rhetorical devices in 515–21, 524–5
expolitio (figure of speech) 839
expression 509, 757–66
Ezekiel 213, 260, 323, 330, 528, 831, 933, 961, 963, 995

faith: articles of 220–1; of paralytic's friends (parable) 883–5; true nature of 54–5; as a virtue 1042–4; as yardstick for life 55–6
Fall, the 23, 1084 n414
Farel, Guillaume 9
fasting 49–50, 68, 164, 285–7, 301, 514, 516, 540–1, 591, 608–10, 635, 713, 865, 1037
Fathers and Doctors of the church: as authority 604–7; characteristics of 436; on confession 74–5; influence on Erasmus 109–10; interpretation of Scripture 209–12, 912–17; as orators 193–9; as preachers 108–9; use of allegory by 917–18; use of hyperbole by 833–4; use of rhetoric by 178–9; use of Scripture as exordia by 514–15; works to be studied 67, 490–6
feasts and festivals 423–6
Fernández, Alonso 11
figures of speech *(schemata)* 190, 815–16; advice to preacher on use of 829–34, 837, 844–5, 850–2, 860, 862–3, 865–6, 869–71, 874–5, 877–8, 880–1; sermon illustrating use of 881–90, 934–7. *See also individual figures*
Fisher, John, St (bishop of Rochester) 79, 84–6, 92, 93 n71, 243–4, 354
'flesh,' interpretations of word 908–9
flesh vs spirit 262–8, 394, 404–5, 409–11
forensic speaking. *See* judicial (forensic) speaking
forgiveness 5, 30–1, 33, 69. *See also* absolution; penance; penitents; restitution
Franciscans 5, 361 n737, 805
'French' pox 40–1, 258 n58
frequentatio (figure of speech) 839
Froben, Johann, publishing Luther 234
Fugger, Anton 245
Fulgentius, St 495 n136
Fumaroli, Marc 110
funeral orations 502–3

Gelenius, Sigismundus 247
Gellius, Aulus, *Noctes Atticae* 389
genera dicendi (kinds of speaking) 171–2, 181–2, 497–504. *See also* biblical *genera*
genus and species 657–8, 995–7
genus demonstrativum 112–13
genus dialecticum 114
genus didascalicum 114
genus suasorium 114
Gerson, John (Jean) 9, 31–2, 198 n608, 495
Giberti, Gian Matteo 100
God: abilities gifted by 321–5; contraries to 1029–30; direct confession to 46–7; fear of 159 n389; hand in history 385–6; imparting knowledge 296–8; inhabiting the Dionysian hierarchy 1027–8; inscrutable nature of 1024–6; as locus for sermons 1056–7; as master to bishops 276–7; mercy of 801–2; nature of 1065–75; praises of 175, 553–5; revelation of 1080–8; as *summum bonum* 1045 n154; Word given by 272. *See also* Christ; Holy Spirit; Trinity
God and humanity 160, 163, 713–14, 802–4; ascent of Christian to God 697–8; in similitudes 704–5
godliness: congregation pursuing 158–9, 161–2; definition of 80 n11; humanity called to 124–5; preacher pursuing 157–8. *See also pietas*; pseudopiety
good works 235, 285–6, 299, 322, 1019–21
grace 34, 46–7, 118 n179, 323 n551; as gift to all nations 410; given to those who strive 118–19; of God 72, 802–4; in God's forgiveness 26; and the Law 994–5; perfecting nature 325 n562, 470–1, 471 n23; theology of 324 n560

gradatio (figure of speech) 856–7
grammar 164–6, 473–4
Gratian, Johannes 5
greed 303 n382
Greek language 485–6, 982
Gregory of Nazianzus 131, 287, 491–2; *Oratio 27* 842; *Oratio 31* 895
Gregory the Great, St 127, 355–6, 494

Hail Mary, the 535–7
hatred 570
healers 65–6
heart: 'double' (world vs God) 269–70; Holy Spirit in 263–4; nature of 257–9; pure in preacher 260–2; as 'understanding' 323. *See also* purity of heart
heavenly hierarchy 1023, 1027
heavenly philosophy 292, 320, 330–1, 963
Hebrew language 485–6, 982
hell 320
Henry VIII, king of England 9, 244, 352
heresy 228 n782, 236, 300, 372–3, 718–19, 1048
hermeneutical principles 199–201, 213, 217–18
heroic virtues 435 n1262
Hesiod (Greek poet), *Works and Days* 257 n55
Hilarius, Bertholf 16
Hilary, St (bishop of Poitiers) 493 n125, 966–7, 1068 n257, 1069 n260
'holy,' interpretations of word 903
Holy of holies 1069 and n267
Holy Spirit: aid in preaching 117–19, 138–40, 292–3; as armour of God 317–18; as cleansing fire 300–1; clothing Christ 310; effect on behaviour 290–1, 467; effect on preachers 118–19, 131–3, 261–3; gifts 322, 391–2, 467 n2; nature of 263–4, 1077–8; perfecting natural abilities 321–5, 470–1; reflecting the Word 256–7; and revelation 316, 389, 418–19; seven gifts of 140; threefold spirit in mankind 263–8; use of human tongue 118; work of 133
Homer, *Iliad* 843
honourable category (deliberative speaking) 547–8
hope 1044–5
Horace: *Epistles* 16, 22 n18, 124 n208; *Satires* 257 n51, 508 n214
hospitality, Christian 934–7
Huizinga, Johann, on *Ecclesiastes* 80
humanism 3, 14
humanity: call to godliness 124–5; failings of 20–1; Fall of, the 23; frailty of 4–5, 9, 11, 37; pride of 11; regulations imposed by 49–50; in relation to God 160, 163; restored through Christ 231, 259; Satan leading astray 259; sinful nature of 72; worldly goals of 55–6
humility 24–7, 34, 405–6
humour in sermons 505–9
hymns 501–2
hyperbole 775–6, 828–34
hypocrisy 516–17
hypotyposis (rhetorical device) 517 n269

idleness 324
illustrations 807–9, 873–5, 885–6
imago (figure of speech) 877
increment 698–9, 728–9, 776–7
Index expurgatorius, *Exomologesis* in 22 n18, 22 n20, 37 n75, 69 n190
Index librorum prohibitorum, *Ecclesiastes* in 83
induction 702–4
indulgences 18, 70
insinuation (rhetorical device) 281 n240
instrument (proofs) 642–4
intellectio (figure of speech) 827–8
intellectus (figure of speech) 869
interpretatio (figure of speech) 824
interrogatio (figure of speech) 818–19, 854, 867
interruptions (rhetorical device) 719–20
invention 509
inversio (figure of speech) 874
invocations 533–7
Isaiah 294–6, 333
Isidore (of Seville), *Etymologiae* 259 n61, 309 n423, 583 n593, 633 n863, 653 nn960–4, 664 n1036

Jedin, Hubert 158
Jeremiah 298–9

Jerome, St (Eusebius Hieronymus): as authority 606; on hyperbole in Scriptures 831; as orator 194–5, 494; twisting Scriptural interpretation 916–17; use of allegory by 924–9; use of term *ecclesiastes* by 250 n5; *Adversus Jovinianum* 872 n866; *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten* 121 n195; *Letter to Ageruchia* 208; *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum* 122 n198
Jews. *See* Judaism
John Chrysostom, St: as authority 605–6; on bishops called from monastic life 289; as exemplary preacher 127; on good judgment 283–4; health of 356; against heterodoxy 67; as orator 193, 491; use of figures of speech by 852–3; *De sacerdotio* 350; *Homily XXIX* 284 n253
John the Baptist: comparison to Christ 289–91; and divine law 130–1; lifestyle and training of 289–90; as prophet 393–4
Jonas, Justus 87, 116
Judaism: equated to heresy 67, 413; Erasmus' attitude to 240; literal interpretation of Scripture 214, 943–4; and prophecy 386–8; rejection of gospel 966–7; relationship to Law 41. *See also* Aaron; Abraham; Law
Judas Iscariot 30, 369–70, 874
judgment 295–6; dangers of 629; as duty of bishop 402; as gift of Spirit 283–4; natural 282; in oration 278–84, 497; used by preacher 281–2, 1001–2
judicial (forensic) speaking 171–2, 173 n462, 174, 497–501. *See also* deliberative (suasorial) speaking; epideictic (encomiastic) speaking; *genera dicendi* (kinds of speaking)
Julian the Apostate 379–80
Julius II (pope) 148, 593–5
justification by faith 235–6, 1019–21

Kleinhans, Robert, on *Ecclesiastes* 94
Koler, Johann 245

Lactantius, Lucius Caecilius Firmianus, *Institutiones divinae* 67 n180
laity 54, 909–12. *See also* congregations
language: prophetic 997; use and temperance of 1018–21. *See also* words
languages: ambiguity of 974–80; as barrier to mission 362; character of 879–80; degeneration of 485 n92; for effective preaching 153; knowledge of 485–9; in oration 165–7, 195–6; study of 192–3; vernacular 167, 486–9, 734 n42
Lateran Council, Fifth (1512–17): canons of preaching 98–9; on schooling to preach 136; *Supernae maiestatis praesidio* 97–9
Lateran Council, Fourth (1215): annual confession imposed by 36 n70; conference in confession imposed by 71 n193; obligation of penance by 3; on reform of preaching 96–7; *De praedicatoribus instituendis* 96–7
Lateran Council, Third (1179) 97
Latin language 473 n29, 474 n34, 485–6, 982
Latomus, Bartholomaeus 90–1
laughter, in oration 760 n167
law 224; four stages of 1031–3; and grace 994–5; as locus for sermons 1058–9; and man 1031–3; of Moses 41–2; and prophecy 411–13; and sin 1041. *See also* canon law; divine law; New Law; Old Law; sacred law
Lee, Edward 4 n14, 19 n9, 20 n11, 22 n17
Leo I (the Great), St (pope) 495 n134
leprosy 40
licentia (figure of speech) 837–8
Lips, Maarten 13
living saints, praises of 560–3
Livy 490, 1013 n1735
loci 645–7, 1056–64. *See also* proofs
loci communes. *See* commonplaces (*loci communes*)
logos 253 n16. *See also* Word
Lombard, Peter 5, 18 n2, 21 n15; *Sententiae* 18 n2, 21 n15, 47 n106
Longland, John (bishop of Lincoln) 11
Lord's Prayer 220
Louvain theologians 4–6, 10
Lucifer. *See* Satan

Luther, Martin: on confession 3–4, 12, 19–20, 25–7, 29 n50; and contritionist tradition 5; on the Law 224; opposition from Henry VIII 9; in opposition to Erasmus 20 n12, 25–7, 47 n105, 88
– works: *Babylonian Captivity of the Church* 3; *Confitendi ratio* 8 n26, 9 n30, 19 n10, 47 n108, 50 n119; *Discussion on How Confession Should Be Made* 3, 29 n50, 36 n70, 48 n112, 49 n114; *The Keys* 29 n50, 34 n67; *Sacrament of Penance* 44 n99, 47 n105, 50 n122, 70 n191; *Sermon on the Sacrament of Penance* 3
Lutherans and sacrament of confession 12

manner (proofs) 644–5
martyrs 175
Mary, the Virgin (mother of Jesus): allegory applied to 920–4; cult of 52; perpetual virginity 233; in preaching 175; as pure 272; veneration 535–7
mass, fasting before 49–50
Masson, Jacques 136, 161; *De confessione secreta* 9
matrimony 29, 48, 232 n811, 551–2, 925–9, 1091 n468
maxims 646, 654–6. *See also* adage (figure of speech)
Maximus the Confessor, St 495 n135
Melanchthon, Philippus 12, 113–15
membra (figure of speech) 819–20
memory 187–9, 509, 735–8
mercy, God's 801–2
metaphor 268 n132, 787–8, 871–2, 875–9; advice to preacher on use of 896–900; in oration 191–2; in Scripture 895–6; types of 890–5. *See also* allegory; anagogy
miracles: age of 133, 321–2, 387; by Christ 881, 883, 885, 991–2; invented 175–6, 566–7; in postapostolic age 324, 362, 387, 394–6
mission 357–63, 366–70
monarchical hierarchy 1024, 1027–8
monastic life 287–9, 348–9, 752–3, 1060 n218; austerity of 367–8; dead to the world 901–4; Erasmus' criticism of 163–4; obedience to superiors 907–8
monks 5, 10, 44, 752–3
moral category (deliberative speaking) 548
moral decay 120, 149–51
More, Thomas, St 79, 84 n31, 92, 93 n71, 245, 688
mortal danger 413–14
mortal sins 29, 31 n56, 49 n114, 50–1
Mosaic priests as models 302–5, 306–7, 318–19
Moses 130, 301–2
Mountjoy, William 245

names in oration 631–3
narration 183–4, 537 n384
natural abilities 470–1, 483–5
neighbour 56–7, 63, 64
nepotism 351
Nesselrath, Heinz-Günther 239
New Law: clarifying the Old Law 1033–7; sacraments 1037–8. *See also* law
notatio (figure of speech) 860
numbers and times in oration 998

oaths (proofs) 604
'obedience,' interpretations of word 906–8
occultatio (figure of speech) 864
occupatio (figure of speech) 823
Oecolampadius, Johannes 9, 234
Old Law: as clarified by the New Law 1033–7; foretelling Christ 1038–9. *See also* law
Old Testament 918–19, 999–1001. *See also* prophets; Scripture
O'Malley, John, on *Ecclesiastes* 81
oratorical rhetoric 103–4, 112–15, 156
orators, secular 168–70, 252, 435–6, 467–8
oratory: five parts of 167–8; five tasks of 509–10; fundamental principles of 497; oration, parts of 182–7; Pauline categories of 112, 114, 172–3; sacred 79–80; skills in 101–3, 468–73, 483–5; types of 497–504; use of jokes in 505–7
ordination 402

Ordo penitentiae (1973) 14
Origen of Alexandria (Origines Adamantius): against heterodoxy 67; as orator 193–4, 492 n120; on St Peter's denial 947–8; twisting scriptural interpretation 916–17; use of allegory 214–15; *Homily 17* 830

paideia 151–2, 156
papal indulgences 232 n807, 701
parables 277–8, 366, 405 n1044, 406, 517
paralipsis (rhetorical device) 559–60
paralogisms 468 n9
parochi 374–6
Paul, St: beseeching 570–1; death of 363 n750; examples of pride 405 n1044, 406–7; as exemplary preacher 266, 285, 337; Holy Spirit in 265–6; as model missionary 362; as mortal 265–6; perfected by the Holy Spirit 325; as steward of the Word 276; studying 321; use of rhetorical devices by 179, 278–80, 620–1, 1006–11
Paumgartner, Johann 245
penance 2–3; annual obligation of 3; humiliation of body in 27–8; public 28, 45; true nature of 73. *See also* absolution; confession; restitution
penance, sacrament of. *See* confession, sacrament of
penitentials (handbook for confessors) 8–9, 21 n15, 27, 44 n97, 44 n98, 54
penitents: choice of confessor by 49, 72; humiliations afflicted on 28; need for brevity 50–1; obligation to confess 71, 73; overconfidence in 42–3, 73–4; role in sacrament of confession 20, 45–7, 50–1. *See also* confessors
Pentecost 131–3, 261 n82, 264, 1002–6
'perfection,' interpretations of word 908
performance in oration 738–9
permissio (figure of speech) 824–5
permutation (figure of speech) 834–7
persuasion through oratory 168–70, 171, 179, 299–301
Peter, St 265, 944–8, 1002–6
Pflug, Julius 90–1
Pharisees 886–9, 942
philosophy of Christ. *See* heavenly philosophy
pictures, mental. *See* illustrations
pietas 80 and n11, 103–4, 112, 140, 143, 157, 159, 162, 204, 227–8, 1047. *See also* godliness
Pilate, Pontius 270
pilgrimage 12, 68, 367
pity 570
place (proofs) 636–7
plague victims 72–3
Plato 489; *Cratylus* 744
Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis historia* 478 n55, 690
Plutarch 193, 483 n79, 490 and n113, 689 n152, 841, 1006 n1695
– *Apophthegmata*, published by Erasmus with Froben 193 n582
– *Lives*: *Alcibiades* 518 n272; *Alexander* 271 n147, 471 n20, 689 and n1152, 1009 n1717, 1050 n180; *Antony* 777, 813 and n467; *Aristides* 617 n768; *Caesar* 602 n684; *Cato the Elder* (*Marcus Porcius Cato*, *Cato Major*, *Cato Censor*) 436 n1274, 609 n724, 659 n1006, 672 n1081; *Cato the Younger* (*Cato Minor*, *Cato Uticensis*) 436 n1275, 485 n90, 518 n274, 598 n658, 659 n1006, 787 and n342; *Demetrius* 436 n1270; *Demosthenes* 738 n55, 586–7 n608; *Isocrates* 484 n85; *Lycurgus* 488 n97; *Phocion* 518 n272; *Themistocles* 362 n738, 489 n101
– *Moralia* 193 n582, 270 n146, 274 n173, 483 n79, 686 n1138; (2A) 483 n79; (3C–F) 542 n394; (3E) 151 n349; (4A–B) 135 n268, 154 n363; (5F) 436 n1270; (6C–7C) 188 n556; (7A–F) 155 n368, 160 n392; (7D) 80 n10; (8B) 193 n582; (12C–D) 130 n242; (70.30C) 270 n146; (93C) 274 n173; (106B) 573 n549; (170A–B) 424 n1202; (181.32F) 267 and n128; (182C) 686 n1138; (208.4C–D) 711 and n1266; (242.25C) 858 and n766; (343C) 617 n768; (384D–394C) 1066 and n233; (461) 935 n1212; (539) 1012 n1731; (606.16B) 270 n146; (612E) 522 n295; (811B) 329 n579; (845A–B) 189, 510 n219; (848A–B) 506 n210; (986B–992E) 841

– Pseudo-Plutarch, *De vita et poesi Homeri* 793 and n375
political hierarchy 1023–4, 1027
pope: authority of 343–4; criticism of 360; role of 146–7
Porphyry (Porphyrios) 985 n1515
possessions 55–6, 367–8, 404, 406
praecisio (figure of speech) 826–7
prayer 46–7, 67, 370–2, 401
preachers: abstaining from vice 422–3; age of 427; alms receiving by 427–8; as ambassadors of heavenly philosophy 330–1; appointments of 339–40, 373–4; authority of 420, 422–34, 1011–14; behaviours to be avoided 272–4; characteristics needed in 135–6, 259–60, 422; as Christ-like 103, 259 n64; correcting faults 405; credibility of 299–300, 599–600; decorum of 1014–21; dignity of office 399–400; duties of 132, 136–7, 314–16, 408–9, 504; education of 103–5, 120–1, 297–8, 326–8; and emotions 804–6; families of 303; as foreigner 426–7; godliness of 103, 112, 140, 157–8; holiness of 302–3; judgment of 278–84; living the gospel 316–18, 336–7; love for 420, 434–5; love of God's Word 299; modesty in 1012–14; other-worldliness of 305–6; power of persuasion 381–3; power through the Holy Spirit 266–8; preparation to preach 810–11, 1097; pride in task 374–6; as prophets 390–2, 394–8; provisions for 368–70; pure heart in 260–2; and royalty 376–7, 380–2; sermons of 504–5, 1014–19; sobriety of 309; as stewards of the Word 275–7; stipend of 427–8, 432–3; striving to receive Holy Spirit 119; study of essential texts 155–6; as subject to temptations 579–80; as teachers 120–1; terms used by Erasmus for 125–6; threefold spirit of 157–8; use of allegory by 964–5, 970–2; use of discernment by 424–6; use of figures of speech by 829–34, 837, 844–5, 850–2, 860, 862–3, 865–6, 869–71, 874–5, 877–8, 880–1; use of interpreters of Scripture by 912–16; use of metaphor by 896–900; as 'watchmen' 411–12, 413–14, 417; world's perception of 270–4
preachers, contemporary 132–4; competence of 99–100; consecration ceremonies of 304; faults in 278 n207, 282–3, 327, 331–7, 341, 377, 422–3; need for reform of 134; sermons of 730–5; status of 134–6
preaching: as an art 486–97; canons of 98–9; compared to trade 327–8; contemporary with Erasmus 95–6; dangers of 119–20; delegation of 329; difficulty of office 291, 338–9, 374; *genera dicendi* (kinds of speaking) 171–2, 181–2, 497–504; importance of 79–80, 407–8; moral and social reform through 124–5; Pauline categories of 112, 114, 172–3, 497 n151, 500–1; public 121–4; reform of 96–9, 100–1, 120–1; rewards of 438; themes in 130–1, 175–6, 219–20, 228–30; use of jokes in 505–7; use of oratorical rhetoric in 103–4. *See also* sermons
precedents (proofs) 601–2
Prester John 359 n726
pride 405–7
priests 7, 70–3, 405–7. *See also* clergy
princes: as bishop-princes 349–52; called *corepiscopi* 348–9; Christian 360; compared to preachers 376–7, 380–2; duties of 60, 370; role in society 471
proem. *See* exordia
pronominatio (figure of speech) 827
pronunciation 167, 189
proofs: by comparison 275 n183; devising of 611–15, 618–22; in judicial oratory 600–7; multiple types applied to one topic 678–80; nontechnical 600–9, 674; in oration 185–7; parts of 715–17; properties, accidental 633–6; technical 636–45, 674–5; twisting scriptural interpretation 207–8; using personal attributes in 615–17
prophecy: Old Testament prefiguring Christ 398–9; revealed by Holy Spirit 389; used to interpret Scripture 387–8
prophets: as authority akin to divinity 386–7; base 388–9; false, dangers of 372–3; New Testament 387–8, 392–

5, 397 n987; Old Testament 389–90, 392–5, 397 n987
propositions 185–7, 472 n27, 585–7, 588–91, 592–9, 609–11, 685–8. *See also* proofs
props in oration 766, 815
proverbs. *See* adage (figure of speech)
Prudentius 494
Pseudo-Augustine. *See* Augustine, St (Aurelius Augustinus), works attributed to
Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite: cosmic hierarchies of 221–2, 361 n736, 1022–4; *Divine Names, The* 1026 n18, 1074
pseudopiety 163–4
Pseudo-Plutarch. *See* Plutarch
public speaking 156–7, 167
punishments 33, 67–9, 319–20, 366–7, 419
purity of heart 157, 260–2, 270–1, 284, 299–301, 319
purity of life 306–7, 309, 319
purpose, in oration 497

Quintilian: on best authors to read 489 n102; on consolatory speeches 574 n553; on enthymeme 431 n1235; on *genera* 500 n164; on hand gestures 762–3; on pagan rhetoricians 138; on similitudes 706 n1249; on *similitudo* 877; teachings on oratorical rhetoric 101–5; on three kinds of speaking (*genera dicendi*) 171–4;
– *Institutio oratoria* 101, 483 n79, 725 n5, 755 n131

ratiocinatio (figure of speech) 852–4
ratiocination 783–5
rebuke through oratory 180–1, 574–80, 1014–19
recapitulation 998
Reformation theology 232–3
refutation through oratory 667–9, 688–90
relation in oratory 710–14
'religion,' interpretations of word 904–6
religious ceremonies 285–6
repentance. *See* penance
repetitio (figure of speech) 816–17
repetition (rhetorical device) 296 n331
reputation, restoration of 62
reserved cases 47 n108
restitution 18, 61–6. *See also* satisfaction
reticentia (figure of speech) 863
Reuchlin, Johann, *Liber congestorum de arte praedicandi* 113
revelation of God 1080–8
reward 130 and n242, 159, 179–80, 366, 368–9, 374–5, 390, 399, 419, 569, 573, 586, 598–9, 626, 1032, 1046
rhetoric: art of 164–7, 168–70; ecclesiastical 112, 172–81; oratorical 103–4, 112–15, 156; use of by Fathers of the church 178–9; use of by Erasmus 134–6, 258 n58
Rhetorica ad Herennium 467 n4, 497 n146, 499 n156, 726 n8; authorship of 816 n474; external advantages in 556 n462; figures of speech taken from 816; five parts of proofs in 715 n1285; influence on Erasmus 115; *membra* and *articuli* in 819 n495; memory in 735 n48
rhetorical devices 135–6. *See also individual devices*
Rosemondt, Godeschalk 9
rumours (proofs) 602–3

Sabbatarians 942
Sabellians 415 n1135
sacraments 142–3, 232, 401, 1056 n210
sacred law 482 n77
sacrifice 304
saints: praises of 555–60, 563–6; in preaching 175–6; relics of 815; as role models 177–8
salvation 36, 73
salvation history 1090–6
Samuel, as judge and prophet 402
Satan 23, 25, 223–4, 259, 998, 1029–30, 1059
satisfaction 2–3, 12, 18, 66–8, 69–70. *See also* restitution
schemata. *See* figures of speech *(schemata)*
scholastic education 469–70
scholasticism 18 n2
Scotus, John Duns 5, 126 n219, 482 n76, 496
Scripture: analysis, methods of 982–6; authority of 912–16, 967–8, 1039–41; commentaries on 209–12; consistency

within 212–13; as divinely inspired 218–19; four senses of 200–1, 932–4; hidden meaning of 387–8, 418–19, 962–3; hyperbole in 829–33; importance of studying 808; instructional nature of 302 n375; interpretation of 199–207, 214–17, 896–900, 912–16, 920–4, 972–82; interpretation of, literal 202–4, 418, 939–44, 952–8; interpretation of, mystical 418–19; interpretation of, twisted 207–8, 914–16; metaphor in 895–6; Old Testament pointing to Christ 201; revealed by the Spirit 316; in 'thematic' sermons 511–15; as 'witness' 737
scrupulosity 8, 12, 31–2, 42, 45–6, 51
self-abasement, before God 25–7
seminaries 370 n807; as bishop's collegium 152–7, 344, 352; Catholic 158
Seneca 490; *De providentia* 572 n541
sensory perception 395–6
sententia (figure of speech) 864 n813
sermocinatio (figure of speech) 842, 854, 860–3
Sermon on the Mount 285
sermons: concerning concord 230–1; delivery of 111; humour in 505–9; order of topics 730–5; parts of 182–7; scholastic 107, 110–12; setting of 122–3; thematic 106–8, 182–3, 511–15; topics for 109, 111–12, 130–1, 159–60, 219–20, 228–30, 1055–64; university-style 107
service, selfless 434–5
significatio (figure of speech) 863–4
signs (proofs) 607–9
similes 373 n826
similitude 662–7, 673–4, 702–7, 872 n868. *See also* dissimilitudes
similitudo (figure of speech) 864, 876–9. *See also* dissimilitudes
simony 303 n383
sin: affected by love of God 46; cachet attached to 30; circumstances surrounding 49; definition of 21; evaluation of 29, 58–60; hatred of 46, 74–5; as infectious 37–8; as offence against divine law 48 n112; pride in 30–1; remembering 57; remission of 33, 70; repetition of 46; of restitution 29; severity of in comparison 38; tongue as instrument of 57; types of 29, 31–2, 37, 48, 57–9, 60–1
Solomon, as wise ruler 371
Song of Solomon, allegorical interpretation 919–21
Son of God 1075–6. *See also* Christ; God; Holy Spirit; Trinity
soul 72, 257, 466–7, 690 n1156
'Spanish monks' 10
speech 323, 879–80
spirit of Christ 258–9, 269
spirit of humanity 23–4, 29, 30, 61, 269, 323
spiritual devotions 285–6
spiritual discipline, in learning 296–7
spiritual hierarchy 1024, 1028
spiritual instruction, by bishops 142–3
spiritual kinship 48
spiritual physician 20, 20 n13, 25, 29–30, 66–7
spiritual vs temporal 270–1
Stadion, Christoph von 79, 92–3, 242–6
status 174, 498–9, 545 n403, 581–5
stewardship 275–8
stipend 403–4, 427–8, 432–3
Stoics on emotions 721 n1317, 1053 n194
Steuco, Agostino, *Adversus Lutheranos* 13
suasorial speaking. *See* deliberative (suasorial) speaking
subiectio (figure of speech) 820–2, 854, 855–6
sublation 610–11
superstition 287, 349 n683, 412, 683, 700, 815, 846, 860, 941–2, 1007, 1010, 1032
supposition 777–82
Surgant, Johann Ulrich 99–100
sylva 228–30, 1064
syphilis 258 n58. *See* 'French' pox
Syriac language 485

Tacitus, Cornelius 490
'Taxander' 10, 32 n60, 35 n69, 37 n74, 38 n78, 41 n86, 42 n92, 49 n116
teachers: bishops as 126–7, 140–2, 145–6; role in society 471; skills needed in 482–3. *See also* preachers
teaching 168–71, 402–4, 682–4
Telle, Emile, on *Ecclesiastes* 80

temperance 1053–4
temptation 414, 507, 579, 802
Tertullian (Septimus Tertullianus) 67, 492–3
'thematic' sermons 106–8, 182–3, 511–15
Themistocles 362, 489, 518
Theodosius I (emperor) 377–9
theologian, true nature of 155
theological education 469–70
theological virtues 467 n2
Thomas Aquinas, St 5, 18 n2, 495 n138, 496; on grace perfecting nature 470 n16; on Holy Spirit in preaching 118
– *In III Sententiarum* 512 n232
– *Secunda secundae* 226–7
– *Summa theologiae I* 256 n49, 257 n52, 467 n2, 470 n16, 471 n23, 713 n1281, 1041 n137
– *Summa theologiae II* 54 n135, 117 n174, 118 n177, 130 n 242, 169 n446, 467 n2
– *Summa theologiae III* 18 n2, 36 n70, 47 n108
– *Supplementum* 18 n2, 36 n70
Ticonius, rules of. *See* Tyconius, rules of
time (proofs) 637–41
tithes 430–2
tongue: learned 295–6, 298–9; power of 415–16; used by Holy Spirit 118
torture (proofs) 603–4
touch 307–8
trade and tradesmen 62–5
traductio (figure of speech) 847–8
transcendent philosophy. *See* heavenly philosophy
transitio (figure of speech) 858
Trent, Council of 13–14, 112; on definition of sin 48 n112; on education 326 n566; influence of *Ecclesiastes* on 95; reflecting Erasmus' views 270 n140, 344 n665, 344 n667, 349 n685, 355 n704, 403 n1029, 1097 n518
Trinity 56–7, 107, 222, 939, 1026–7, 1078–80. *See also* Christ; God; Holy Spirit
tropes. *See* metaphor
tropology 200, 216, 619, 637, 831, 920, 933–4, 938, 957, 966–8, 970
Tyconius, rules of 217, 220, 993–9
Utenheim, Christoph von (bishop of Basel) 84, 87

Valla, Lorenzo 199
venial sins 29, 31–2, 49 n114, 50–1
vernacular language 167, 486–9, 734 n42
vestments, allegorical meaning 317–18
vices 57, 889; dealt with in exordia 529; denouncing 575–80; in human nature 55–6; preaching against 1014–17
vices and virtues 162, 557–60, 1046–7, 1054; catalogue of 226–7; loci for sermons 1059–64; in preachers 436–8; as source for commonplaces 769; as topics of sermons 159–60
vigour in speech 725, 816–17
Virgil 490
Vitrier, Jean 99, 116, 119 n184, 188, 189 n559, 507–8
virtues: cardinal 227, 1047 n161; emulation of 871–2; heroic 435 n1262; in human nature 55–6; natural 436–7
voice, use of in delivery of oration 739–47, 755–7
Vroye, Joost 2
vulgar language. *See* vernacular language

Warham, William (archbishop of Canterbury) 86, 245, 352–5
Wied, Hermann von (archbishop of Cologne) 11
witchcraft 576–7
Word: Christ as 117, 126–7, 253; given by God 272; of God 349, 391; reflecting the Spirit 256–7
words: development of over time 474–7; differing interpretations of 900–10; origins of 476–9; as used by ancients 474–6. *See also* language
'world,' interpretations of word 901–3
worldly goods 55–6, 367–8, 404, 406
worship 227–8
written documents (proofs) 604

Zacchaeus 369
Zeno of Citium 468 n8
Zúñiga, Diego López de 6–7, 20 n12; *Conclusiones* 2